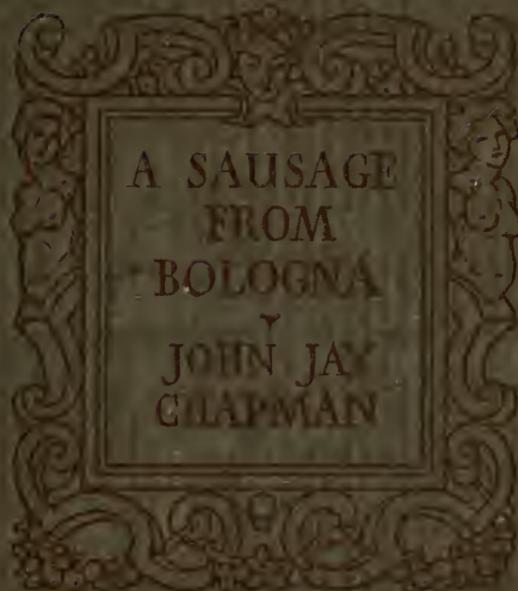


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A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

A SAUSAGE FROM
BOLOGNA

A Comedy in Four Acts

BY

JOHN JAY CHAPMAN



*For aught that I could ever read,
Could ever read by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth.*

*A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

NEW YORK
MOFFAT, YARD & CO.
1909

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DEDICATED TO THE CLASS OF '84

HARVARD

SCENE
BOLOGNA

Act I

SCENE 1. A Room in the Inn.

SCENE 2. The Countess's Boudoir.

Act II

The Countess's Drawing-room.

Act III

SCENE 1. A Room in the Inn.

SCENE 2. The Countess's Boudoir.

Act IV

SCENE 1. The Corridor outside the
Countess's Drawing-room.

SCENE 2. The Countess's Drawing-
room.

CHARACTERS

HECTOR BONONCINI, *a young man who returns from his travels, leaving his betrothed, Donna Julia, in Paris.*
ANDREA, *his servant.*

GIACOMO }
PIETRO }
RUFREDO } *three of his early friends. Giacomo is betrothed to Lucia.*

PRINCE STEPHEN TELEKY, *a young Hungarian nobleman.*

CONTESSA BONONCINI, *a distant cousin of Hector's.*

ANGELA }
LUCIA } *her nieces. Lucia is betrothed to Giacomo.*

ABBÉ PANDOLFINI }
SIGNOR SARRAGOSSA } *friends of the Countess.*

BOBO SARRAGOSSA, *son of Signor Sarragossa.*

HIPPOLITO, *servant of the Countess.*

CAVALIERE PROTOCOPOLI }
CONTE GIUSTI }
COMMANDANTE FRESCOBALDI }
SIGNOR DONATO } *members of a benevolent society called the Apostles of the Poor.*

DONNA JULIA, *a widow, betrothed to Hector.*

MATTEO, *servant to the Abbé.*

LUIGI, *an inn-keeper.*

Officers of the Police and Guardians of the Peace

ACT I

SCENE FIRST

A ROOM IN THE INN

Enter, as from a journey, Hector and Andrea his servant; Luigi, the innkeeper, conducting them.

HECTOR (*to Luigi*). No announcement, mind you!

Show them in.

Tell them his excellency waits for them.

No better room than this? There, get you gone!

[Exit Luigi.]

Andrea. It is his best, my master. Ah, my heart!

Hector. And has not suffered sweeping since I knew it.

Andrea. The very bedposts, chairs and candlesticks! The very smell! The fat old innkeeper—I almost took the rascal in my arms—That villainous old Luigi. Ah, signor, Bologna has not changed. Even at the gate My heart was all a-flutter; every street, Column and courtyard, statue, niche, façade, Nodding a welcome to her sons again. Your honour does permit me to shed tears?

Hector. Not on your life, you wily crocodile!

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You will betray me. Wait till supper time.
Some gentlemen are coming here to meet me.

Andrea. Gentlemen?

Hector. Friends of my boyhood, comrades, school-fellows.

I have not seen them for this fourteen years,
When they and I were at a baby-school
Before I went to France. Control your tears
And you shall see some sport. I sent them word
The Mayor of Paris, coming to Bologna,
Was pleased to have them call.

Enter Luigi with a large register.

Luigi. His excellence will deign to write his name?
The city laws are strict—

Hector (knocks the book from his hand). Get down,
I say!—

You'll learn my name and title soon enough,—
And show the signors up immediately.

[Pushes him out. *Exit Luigi.*

Andrea (producing a small packet). Forgive me,
master. 'Tis a sacred trust.

In Paris, ere we parted, Donna Julia
Charged me, with tears, that I should give you this
Upon our first arrival in Bologna.

ACT FIRST

Hector (*taking packet*). She thinks I flee her; but I fly to her.

The jealous angel! Why, it is for her
I make this stupid journey. It's for her,
My Julia, my sweet, petulant, fond girl!

Andrea. Yes, signor, but she is a widow.

Hector. What's that? What's that to you, Diogenes?

Andrea. Widows lack confidence.

Hector. Then give them love.
I could not love her more were she a maid.

Andrea. She is a widow; she will follow you.

Hector. Follow she may, but find me she shall not
Before I end my business in this town.
Go and unpack.

[*Exit Andrea, and enter Luigi, showing in Giacomo, Pietro and Rufredo.*

Luigi (*in a whisper*). It is a madman! Have a care,
your worships.

Hector (*places three armchairs for them, and they sit*). Serene and noble gentles of Bologna,
Who stand amazéd that your deeds should live
And cover France with knowledge of your names,—
Shaking her lilies with your windy fame,—
Know that I too was born in Italy.

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Sit while I tell you something of myself.

Pietro (to Giacomo). This is some charlatan whose tale will end

With a request we buy a box of pills.

I will be off. (*To Hector.*) Adieu, Polichinelle.

Giacomo. Nay, stay; it is the latest thing from France.

What more amusing pastime could we find?

Rufredo. We are the dupes of an impertinence.

Giacomo. Then stay and reap the sport.

Hector. I was a scholar of some little note
Before the down had blossomed on my lip.

Pietro. What's that to us?

Giacomo. Faster, old boy.

Hector. In old Filelfo's school—(*They manifest interest; rise, crowd about Hector, examining him closely.*)

Pietro. Filelfo's school!

Giacomo. Who is it? Who is it?

Rufredo. Who are you, in the name of Satan?

Hector. Do you not know me—Hector Bononcini?

(*Great excitement and shouts of “Hector, Hector.”*)

Hector embraces them and kisses each one on both cheeks, all of them talking at once.)

Rufredo. But are you Mayor of Paris? (*Laughter.*)

ACT FIRST

Hector. Yes, of Paris and of Baghdad and the out-lying provinces. Some few I cannot attend to personally, but I farm them out. Now what say you? Wine? (Rings the bell. Enter *Luigi*. To *Luigi*.) Wine!

Pietro (to *Luigi*). Wine, you rascal!

Rufredo (to *Luigi*). Wine!—do you hear?

Luigi (aside). He has affected them all. (*Aloud*.) Immediately, your worships.

Pietro. Come, tell us some tittle, some wee morsel of truth,—two words. How did you come? Where did you come from? Are you going to stay?

Rufredo. Why do you conceal yourself?

Giacomo. Are you flying from justice?

Pietro. Or from injustice?

Rufredo. In love?

Giacomo. In debt?

Hector. Listen! I am come to you in a serious crisis of my affairs. As for the history of all my adventures since leaving Bologna—

Pietro. Spare us, spare us! One wee morsel of truth is all I beg.

Hector. It has become necessary for me to revisit my native land, and to revisit it in disguise. As to *what* disguise—

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Pietro. If you go disguised as an honest man you will get found out immediately.

Giacomo. Better set up as a thief.

Hector. I think of turning actor.

All. Bravo!

Hector. But you must wait. I have a friend to introduce to you, the dearest friend I made in all my travels. He is, I find, by some divine accident, studying music in Bologna, and I have sent for him. (*Enter Luigi, showing in Teleky. To Teleky.*) Ah, Stephen, to think of my finding you in Bologna! My friends, Prince Stephen Teleky—Signor Pietro Sanguardi, Signor Giacomo dei Gatti, Signor Rufredo Dolci. (*All the men bow formally.*)

(*To Teleky, whose hand he is still holding.*) They are my earliest friends; indeed my palm Was locked in theirs almost in babyhood.

Teleky. Hector and I have long been bósom friends. A few short dizzy weeks of rapid youth Did leave us brothers; since which time I have Longed to call his friends mine. (*Teleky shakes hands with the three.*)

(*To Hector.*) Hector, I have obeyed your mystic call Which trumpeted from the romantic world

ACT FIRST

You ever walk in. If it finds me sad—

Hector. We'll study how to dissipate the clouds.

Here's to our meeting! (*The wine has been brought in; they drink.*)

This congress from the corners of the world

Has deep importance and immediate work.

(*They sit down. Hector takes from a portmanteau a package of papers wrapped in black oil-cloth and hands out documents as he proceeds.*)

I had an uncle, an eccentric sage,

Rich, old and foolish. Now, this uncle dies,

And leaves a fortune. There, behold the will,—

A lawyer's letter. But I should begin

By telling you this uncle had a niece,

Already rich herself, a proud young girl

Who has refused a hundred proper men,

And is a problem to her family.

And all these people are some kin to me,

Pompous provincials and the kind of folk

I knew that I should meet in Purgatory,

But trusted not before.

Giacomo (to Teleky). You know him, sir,

And know his way of talking. He has not

Seen his kind cousins for some fourteen years.

Here in Bologna they are much esteemed,

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

And I myself—

Hector. Pray, do not interrupt.
This uncle, being inspired by the devil,
Who teaches dying men to sting mankind,
Bequeaths his fortune to this girl and me
In equal shares, provided, yes, of course,—
Witness the crafty malice of the thing,—
Provided she and I will make a match.

Teleky. Is it a common thing in Italy?

Hector. Most common. A fantastic insolence
Is usual in our wills. A living man
Scruples to couple up his relatives
With bribes of money. But a man once dead
Dares anything. The worst is yet to come.
If one of us, the victims of his choice,
If either of us marries—
The first to marry loses the estate,
The other taking all. We must be lovers,
Or, loving elsewhere, cut each other's throats.

Pietro. Marry the maid; it is the easiest way.

Hector. I do not even wish to see the girl,
Who is, they say, so opposite to marriage
That she does bite all suitors.

Pietro. Perhaps she waits for you.

ACT FIRST

Hector.

It is my fear.

I fear she may design to snap me up,
And hold the fortune.

Pietro.

Hang her, let her go!

Hector. So have I done, nor given a thought to her
Till—here, my friends, begins a confidence—
I fell in love myself. Now all is said.
I cannot wed before this maid be wed.
A lovely girl in early widowhood
Now holds my heart in France. Her only fault
Is a most blind and senseless jealousy.
Is any woman named, she sees a rival;
And therefore dared I not explain to her
My business in Bologna.

Giacomo.

Very wise!

Hector. A business delicate and intricate,—
To marry off my cousin, and win *her*.

Giacomo. To win the fortune, rather.

Hector.

Yes, of course;
For without fortune, who can safely wed?

Giacomo. O wise young bachelor!

Hector.

Nay, hear me out.
My Julia follows me upon the heel.
I know she follows me. I need disguise,

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Or this infatuate widow will undo me.

Giacomo. She would not trust you on an embassy
So supernaturally delicate
As helping find a husband for an heiress.

Hector. Something like that.

Giacomo. Despair, young man, despair!
Your cousin is the fury of Bologna,
A sour, merciless maid. I know her well.

Hector. Till I have seen her I will not despair.
I need a name to reach her drawing-room.
Stephen, how long have you been in Bologna?

Teleky. Scarcely a month.

Hector. What people have you seen?
Teleky. People? No, none. I lead a hermit's life.

Hector. Now, Stephen, by your leave, I'll take your
name.
Had you no letters to your father's friends?

Teleky. Letters?—why, yes; but being out of sorts
I've not delivered them.

Hector. Where are those letters?

Teleky. Why, at my rooms.

Hector. Letters of introduction!
I'll visit my inspiring relatives
Under the aegis of your documents;

ACT FIRST

For my disguise will serve a double end.
Hector, disguised as prince, can manage much
Which Hector by himself, and Hector known,
Could not lay hand to. In my natural self
I am a dullard and a kind of drone.
But in the semblance of another man
My faculties grow quick as mercury,
And every wheel in fortune's whirligig
Obeys my will. I'll engineer a match
To rid me of this saucy Angela,
And leave me rich.

Pietro. An inspiration!

Giacomo. There will be sport in this, more than you
know!

Hector (to Teleky). Come, you are moody. Do you
see a flaw?

'Tis nothing to the pranks we played in Pesth.

Teleky. I would not that my moods
Made discords to your mirth. And yet, good friend,
I am grown wise; and since you saw me last
Have eaten bitter herbs.
Take me for what I am; but bid me not
Engage mine honour in an escapade.

Hector. Not for the world. (*Takes Teleky aside while*

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the others shrug shoulders and talk together in dumb-show.) There is some mystery?

Teleky. I left my home in Hungary last year,
Not in disgrace, but in a kind of fog,—
The not unkind oblivion that descends
On youths who burn the candle at both ends;
A timely disappearance,—but to me
It brought remorse, repentance, cutting shame
And horror of myself. But 't is not this. (*A pause.*)
Could you but feel one moment's reverence—(*Hector takes his hand.*)

The music that now keeps me in Bologna
Was never drawn from mortal instrument.

Hector. Ye gods, he is in love!

Teleky. But four days since,
The streets were crazy with the carnival,—
Buffeting cries and colours in the air
Smote on my griefs all day. I watched them out,
The saddest figure in Bologna's streets.
Late in the afternoon I found myself
Beneath a balcony, nor can I tell
How long I had been gazing, for she seemed
To answer with a glance, unconsciously,
The stream my soul was sending up to hers.
She looked away, and with her finger-tips

ACT FIRST

A rose that lay upon the balustrade
Edged to its downfall. Then we both awoke,
Not knowing what had happened,—I to doubt
If it were accident that gave me this. (*Showing a withered rose.*)

Hector. No accident; but an Italian girl,
Who knows the use of carnivals and flowers,
Lives in the realm of downright poesy
Which other nations soar to. She is right,
And you a mystic and absurd recluse.
You should have laughed and kissed your hand to her.

Teleky. No more than this?

Hector. No more? How can I tell?
You have not seen her since?

Teleky. No. Yes, and no.
I saw her in the street; and at a ball,
To which I followed her incognito
Through a friend's kindness,—but I was not known;
Watched her the evening through, and at the end,
With hand and eyes saluted silently.

Hector. But not a word?

Teleky. A word,—a word or two
Beside the carriage door.

Hector. Who is the girl?

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Teleky. Her name is Angela.

Hector. And her address?

Teleky. Via dei Quattro Santi, venti sette.

Hector. It is the girl,—ye gods, it is the girl!

Teleky. What girl?

Hector. My foe, the shrew, my heiress cousin.

Teleky. It cannot be; she is a heavenly fount
Of gentleness and love.

Hector. It is, it is!

Teleky. It cannot be.

Hector. Of course. But if it is?

(*Giacomo, Pietro and Rufredo* have overheard *Hector's* exclamations, and have caught the drift of the conversation which they are following with eagerness. *They have approached Hector and Teleky.*)

Giacomo. Now in the name of Moses and the saints,
Give me one moment's notice all of you;
For none of you can guess the rampant game
That fate unwinds us into. Know that I
Am now affianced to the sweet Lucia,
Sister to Angela the celibate.

Half of my days are spent with both these girls,
And with the aunt who is their guardian,
A dear old countess, who in sheer despair
Over our marriage-hating Angela

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Builds all her hope on Hector. Hector now
Is come to save us! Hector is the word
Opening all doors that lead to Angela.
A Hector we must have,—must have. But how?
Listen, the thing is plain: If Teleky
Will lend his name to Hector, Hector must
Lend *his* to Teleky.

Hector. But let me see.

I thought to disappear without a trace,
Not leave a living dummy in my place
To show my trail—

Giacomo. A Hector we must have!

Hector (to Teleky). Have you a mind to see the girl
again?

Teleky. If it be she, to reach her I consent
To go through torture and imprisonment.

Giacomo. The thing is done! You shall be taken in
Where only angels and domestics walk,
And see her every day and all day long.

Hector. To help a friend I do it.

Giacomo. I'll launch you both upon the drawing-
room,

Then seek the pantry to let laughter loose.

Hector (giving the package of papers to Teleky).

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Stephen, take these; they are your sailing papers.
And send me yours at once.

You have a uniform among your traps?—
One of those gorgeous and ancestral things
That you Hungarians wear—

Teleky. Why, yes,—why, yes—

Hector. I need it. Send it round.

Ah! one thing more. To make me quite complete,
Here register,—Prince Stephen Teleky,—
You are, you see, a guest within the inn;
Sign on the lower line—so. Very good. (*Teleky signs.*)
Good friends, good-bye. I have a rôle to play
And must reflect. You great Hungarians
Are often artists, patrons of the arts
And men of mind?

Teleky. My uncle Ladislas
Has fifty pieces in his orchestra,
And leads the band himself.

Hector. The very type!—
The type I have in mind, and may adopt.
Perhaps I shall regenerate the stage,
Collect a troupe of noble amateurs,
And shake up Hamlet, Lear and Aeschylus.
Prepare for something learnéd and sublime.

ACT FIRST

SCENE SECOND

THE COUNTESS'S BOUDOIR

Angela and Lucia.

LUCIA. Really, sister Angela, you are incorrigible. You flirt with young Sarragossa, and you mean nothing by it.

Angela. I do *not* flirt with young Sarragossa. He is a good, harmless youth, and a friend of mine.

Lucia. But your intentions are not serious, are not honourable.

Angela. His father has made a great quantity of excellent macaroni; and it annoys my snobbish aunt that I should flirt with Bobo. That is simple, is it not? Oh, it is all very well for you, who have no complications in your life! You have your Giacomo. Two love birds,—you have your cage and your seeds. But I am the heiress, and I must be hawked about and talked about. No romance for me! No long good-nights; no letters, pressed into the hand; no early walks and late meetings and all the sweet, mystical telegraphy between times. Everything in the open! Everything flat and worldly! Oh, Lucia, dear, I will try to be good, and not break Bobo's heart; but you must bear with me.

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Lucia. Indeed, I feel for you, Angela; but your time will come. I felt it at the carnival.

Angela. Ah, what a sad time that carnival! Every street lass with her lover, parading herself before my eyes. And within my heart, famine! Now comes this dreadful cousin from abroad to inspect me,—a profligate, a mountebank, a spendthrift, a traducer of women, a cold-blooded, calculating, selfish wanderer, who has lived for many years in Paris,—and he must look me over.

Lucia. But you can refuse him. You and he are treated alike in the will. If you marry someone else, he gets all the money; if he marries someone else, you get all the money.

Angela. I don't want the money. I don't want to refuse him. I don't want to see him. I cannot tell whether I want him or not, by such methods; nor can he tell whether he wants me or not. "Mr. Profligate, let me introduce Miss Fortune." Behold two damnable, selfish hypocrites facing each other; and marriage the question! Is it not base? Is it not degraded? Does it not desecrate and chill and defile? I had rather climb into a man's chamber, and meet him on the footing of a human being, than face him in the parlour in the guise of upholstery and documents.

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Lucia. For Heaven's sake, Angela, you must not talk in this way. You make me tremble. I had something to tell you, but I am afraid.

Angela. Let them not count on me! Aunt Teresa was a Palavicini and she married a Bononcini; and she killed him with explaining the difference,—the difference between *cini* and *cini*. Such people have no children—they deserve none. Let them nurse their coats of arms.

Lucia. Aunt Teresa has been almost a mother to you, Angela, and it seems to me that you should bear with her infirmities. It is the dearest wish of her heart that you should marry this cousin; but she has never harassed you.

Angela. Forgive me, my blessed sister, I will try.

Lucia (kneeling). Promise you will be wise.

Angela. Why, my beautiful Lucia, who can promise that in this world?

Lucia (in a stage whisper, holding out a letter). The star-gazer!

Angela (does not understand).

Lucia (as before). At the carnival!

Angela (still does not understand).

Lucia. At the ball!

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Angela (seizes the paper and reads it with emotion).

Lucia. Ah, sister, may I not see it too? (*Reads.*)

Musing, he stood beneath the palace wall
And watched the joy that made his eyes grow dim;
The tumult of the happy carnival
That brought no face, no voice, no joy to him.
Alas! A rose has fluttered to his feet.
O life and death! But roses yet are sweet.

Lost is the past, the future not yet found.
As in a trance he wanders, seeing not;
Like one who, walking on enchanted ground,
Forgets the steps that brought him to the spot;
But, as the dimness falls upon his eyes,
He knows his soul has entered paradise.

Angela. Is it of me that he is thinking? We stood together.

Lucia. He is thinking of the rose. I threw him no rose.

Angela. True.

Lucia. At the ball he spoke to you, not to me.

Angela. True.

Lucia. Had he not looked so sad, I should not have delivered it. (*Angela kisses her.*) Had he not looked

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so,—so sincere (*Angela kisses her*)—so true (*Angela kisses her*)—so noble, so beautiful—(*Angela kisses her many times and almost with violence.*) He is clearly a poet, and therefore to be trusted; otherwise I should never have delivered the letter. But you will be wise.

Angela. As wise as birds that trust the dulcet spring,
Or fishes that leap back into the sea;
True to their natures, wise in everything—
So true, so wise, my lover findeth me.

Lucia. Too fast, too fast. You will betray everything. (*A little King Charles lap-dog runs across the stage.*) Here comes auntie. You must keep up your shrewishness or we are lost.

Angela. Never fear. Crossness fits me like an old coat.

Enter the Contessa.

Contessa. Good morning, my dears. Have you seen Fifi? That dreadful tom-cat next door is a great danger to her, and I cannot find her.

Lucia. Fifi was here a moment since.

Contessa. But sit down. I must talk to you both. Angela, my love, you must be calm, for the news concerns you. Hector Bononcini has left Paris. He is in Bologna, and he is coming to pay his respects this afternoon.

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Angela. Hector Bononcini. He is my ringmaster; I must dance to his whip.

Contessa. You are absurd, *Angela*, I must receive him. My house has always been open to members of your uncle's family. I determined when I married that I would make no class distinctions. And the situation demands that we should all meet *here*. It is my duty. I am the custodian of these walls and of the family traditions.

Angela. Yes, aunt.

Contessa. I am sure that *Hector* is a young man of breeding, and that nothing will ensue to make me regret this reception of him on an intimate,—at least on a friendly basis. This meeting will be painful to you, as it will be to me. But it must be gone through with.

Angela. I shall endeavour to do my duty, aunt. Must I wear my blue dress, so that he may judge of my arms?

Enter Hippolito, and hands a letter on a tray to the Contessa.

Hippolito. The gentleman will pay his respects this afternoon. [Exit *Hippolito*.]

Contessa. Dear me, Prince Teleky. This is a note from Giacomo, introducing Stephen Teleky. It is the

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first family in Hungary, my dears. The young prince has come to Bologna to study music. Now, Angela, I have but one request to make of you,—that you will treat him with decent civility. His father is an old friend of mine.

Angela. Does he come with an offer of marriage to me?

Contessa. Nonsense, child. He does n't come to you at all, but to me.

Angela. Then I will treat him as a friend, auntie. You shall have no fault to find with me. Is he old?

Contessa. How—old?

Angela. Does he belong in my kindergarten, with Bobo Sarragossa, or in your kindergarten, with Papa Sarragossa?

Contessa. Angela, you allow yourself liberties. Signor Sarragossa is a very respectable man, and an old friend of your uncle's.

Angela. And an old friend of my aunt's. Why should all the talk be of *my* pretendants? Signor Sarragossa is devoted to you, auntie.

Contessa. Nonsense, child. He knows his position too well to venture. My grandfather bought pigs from his uncle.

Angela. I suppose that to *buy* pigs is a sign of no-

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bility; but to *sell* pigs is *canaille*. Auntie, if you talk like that, I shall elope with Bobo.

Lucia. If you do, the Abbé Pandolfini will catch you. He has every intrigue in Bologna by heart before it has occurred.

Angela. That Abbé is a sneak.

Hippolito (announcing). Signor Bobo Sarragossa.

Enter Bobo (a very young man, with blond curly hair).

Bobo. Good morning, signora. Good morning, ladies.

Contessa. Good morning, Bobo.

Bobo. I am early? No? I was walking in the Corso, when I suddenly remembered that it was my birthday—

Contessa. Your birthday!

Angela. Felicitations.

Bobo. As nobody else had remembered it, I thought I would give a few presents,—some bonbons for the young ladies, and a necklace for Fifi. It is the latest thing. It is made of Arabian snail-shells,—fossils, you know. (*Calling.*) Hippolito!

Enter Hippolito with the bonbons and necklace, and exit.

Contessa. But it is charming! Where did you find it?

Bobo. At Giulio's,—the only place. He has a stand-

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ing order to show me all novelties. I seldom pass a day without dropping in there. It will suit Fifi's complexion, I thought.

Contessa. But it is charming. Angela, child, do find Fifi, and let us see it on her at once.

Hippolito (announcing). The Abbé Pandolfini.

Enter Abbé.

Abbé. Ah, contessa! I just put my head in to ask how you have survived the fatigues of the carnival. What a day! My homage, young ladies. Good morning, Signor Bobo. What ardours! What—(*Angela bows somewhat coldly.*)

Angela. One moment, Abbé. I am seeking Fifi.

[*Exit.*

Lucia. Some bonbons, Abbé? A birthday gift from Bobo.

Abbé (aside, looking at the label of the box). From Tartini! (*To Lucia.*) Thanks, thanks. (*Takes several and puts them in his pocket.*) Birthday? Whose birthday? I know every birthday in the Corso. (*To Contessa.*) Contessa, I just popped in at old Luigi's to find out who was in town, you know; and what do you think! Prince Teleky is there, one of the greatest nobles in Europe, and a madman besides, Luigi says.

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(*Angela has brought back the dog, which she has given to her aunt. The Abbé and Lucia crowd around the dog with exclamations of approval.*)

Bobo (to Angela). Ah, signorina.

Angela. Yes, Bobo.

Bobo. Ah, signorina, if I had not known you would refuse it, I should have brought you also a necklace.

Angela. Thank you all the same, Bobo.

Bobo. Will you give me a birthday present?—may I call you Angela?

Angela. Of course you may, Bobo.

Abbé (to Contessa, while the dog is attracting the attention of the rest). Contessa, may I have a private word with you?

Contessa. Apropos, Abbé, you were to tell me about our Benevolent Association. There is to be a meeting of the Apostles of the Poor to-morrow. They are to come here.

Bobo (to the young ladies). Shall we walk in the garden? [*Exeunt Bobo, Angela and Lucia.*]

Abbé (mysteriously). Prepare yourself, Contessa.

Contessa. Some one we know, Abbé? Not a married woman, I hope. Not old Julia Scacchi, I hope—eh? Do not tell me it is my old friend Julia. I warned her last

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year that the publicity of her friendship with that Spanish Viconte was causing remark. Not *Julia*, Abbé!

Abbé. Not in the least, *Contessa*. It is not a married woman at all.

Contessa. Ah, you clever fox!

Abbé. Watch-dog, *Contessa*. I protect the fold,— the lambs and the ewes; and, by the intervention of Providence, I believe I am about to avert a scandal in one of the most illustrious families in Bologna.

Contessa. Abbé, you're a genius!

Abbé. You believe in the sincerity of my friendship, *Contessa*?

Contessa. Ah, Abbé! (*Extends her hand which he kisses*.)

Abbé. If the disinterested devotion of years can establish me in your confidence and lend credit to my words—

Contessa (*laughs*). Unnecessary, my dear Abbé; I shall believe the worst at once. Who does not?

Abbé. But, my dear friend, I must ask your advice. The matter concerns a young lady.

Contessa. A young lady!

Abbé. Of exalted rank.

Contessa. Known to me?

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Abbé. Intimately. She has had the indiscretion to conduct a correspondence with an unknown person, who has been seen under her balcony; and her family—most estimable gentlefolk—are in complete ignorance of the alarming situation. They are persons to whom I am under the greatest obligations in the world—the greatest obligations in the world, *Contessa*.

Contessa. *Abbé*, you are moved. You alarm me.

Abbé. My duty to her guardians,—to society,—to the young lady herself,—but chiefly to her second mother, who is my friend and patron—

Contessa. Mercy on us, *Abbé*! What do you mean? (*The Abbé stands with bent head.*) One of my nieces! (*Abbé ditto.*) Angela!! (*Abbé ditto.*) In my house! Oh, my Angela!

Abbé. Let me entreat you, my old friend, to do nothing rashly. We must observe and study till the situation develops. Angela is headstrong, and might precipitate some disgrace upon the family if she were openly taxed with her—her unwisdom.

Contessa. I remember now, I saw her this morning with a letter in her hand. So this is why she rejects honourable offers of marriage from distinguished suitors! But who has discovered this correspondence?

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Abbé (*points to his breast*). I saw her drop a rose to an individual who disappeared before I could see his face. But I am on his track.

Contessa. Merciful Heaven! On the very day when the Prince is coming! (*Weeps*.)

Abbé. Do you permit me to have my servant watch the balcony for some days? He can wear a Neapolitan cap and station himself unobserved in the street below. No one will notice him.

Contessa. As you will, *Abbé*.

Abbé. Put your confidence in me, *Contessa*, I will protect you.

ACT II

THE CONTESSA'S DRAWING-ROOM

At the centre of stage, at back, are double doors leading into the corridor. On the right centre, up stage, is a harpsichord with the keys turned away from the audience. To the left of the harpsichord a large armchair; nearer the audience, a few feet from armchair, a chest for holding music. To the left of the entrance doors, a small sofa. There is another small sofa at the left of the stage, about halfway back. Various small tables, chairs, sofas, ornaments, &c., including a large Italian chest which stands next the wall, in the same part of the room.

Enter Hippolito showing in Signor Sarragossa, a very large, stout man in an enormous redingote. Hippolito has Fifi on a mat in his arms, and while talking to Sarragossa he deposits her in the armchair, caressing her as he does so.

HIPPOLITO. Madame receives. Ah, Signor Sarragossa it is a great day for us to-day. The young Signor Hector is to present himself.—There, Fifi, my pretty Fifi.

Sarragossa. The young man of the will? Those testamentary arrangements never come off in this world, Hippolito. You may bequeath a nephew money, but

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you cannot leave him a wife. That, he must find for himself.

Hippolito. Ah, but to see Signor Hector again! When I last saw him he was so high (*gesture*). He would climb on my shoulders. He was all gaiety. If there was a grand dinner party, he would watch on the staircase. When I carried by the great silver souptureen, he would drop a cat in it.

Sarragossa. Bravo! He will succeed—that boy.

Hippolito. Oh, signor! he had the disposition of an angel.

Sarragossa. Would I had such a son!—some temperament, some dramatic talent, some fire. Bobo is a grief to me. He is all sincerity and goodness, and no temperament. What one needs in this world is insincerity and dramatic fire. In his place, I should have married Signorina Angela long ago. Tell me, Hippolito, how does Bobo progress?

Hippolito. Ah, signor, so-so.

Sarragossa. I knew it, I knew it. And now comes this firebrand of glory to bear her away before his eyes. In his place—in his place. Hippolito, get me a few moments alone with the Contessa. You can manage these things so easily. Delay the young ladies, when

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they come downstairs, by some device (*gives money*), and leave the Contessa with me.

Hippolito. The signor is too good. But I must tell the signor that it is not a favourable moment. There is a foreign prince who is expected; and the Contessa is disturbed by something.

Sarragossa. Another! The times bid us strike quickly. Shall we Bolognese stand quiet and see the whole earth devoured by foreign princes? (*Aside.*) Courage, Rinaldo Sarragossa!

Hippolito. Very well, signor, but I warn you it is a bad moment.

Sarragossa. Only one thing, Hippolito. Protect me from that peeking scoundrel, the Abbé Pandolfini. If he puts his nose in the house, give me warning. Break a plate before you announce him. I will pay for the plate.

Hippolito. I will do my utmost, signor.

[*Exit Hippolito.*]

Sarragossa. One,—two. (*He practises taking a stride and falling on one knee.*) Too near. One—two. My hand hanging thus; my head bent at first, but afterwards writhing itself to look in her face, as my soul pours forth its torrent. (*Rises.*) Bobo is afraid of the

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nobility. He forgets that they are human beings, whose hearts throb, whose passions surge, whose natures glow—

Enter the Contessa.

Contessa. I can't think what has become of Fifi. Why, Sarragossa, I am receiving the nobility this afternoon. What brings *you* here?

Sarragossa. Grief, signora.

Contessa. Grief? What grief can you have, except over forgetting to take two helpings of sauce when you dined with the Archbishop?

Sarragossa. You would not jest if you knew the truth. I am leaving Bologna.

Contessa. To go fishing in Carnia?

Sarragossa. No, no—not to go fishing. For good, Contessa.

Contessa. Leaving Bologna!

Sarragossa. Leaving these beloved scenes of my youth,—this city where every stone is sanctified by some memory of happiness; this house which I cannot think of without a glow of gratitude.

Contessa. Why, Sarragossa, I did not know you had so much sentiment.

Sarragossa. I did not know it myself. I thought I

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could say the word, and it would be done. I thought to pluck a frail flower out of my memory; and, *Contessa*, the roots of it tore my heart in two. Good-bye.

Contessa. You do not mean it, my friend, surely. When do you go?

Sarragossa. To-night—immediately.

Contessa. And with no explanation of this—this singular conduct?

Sarragossa. Do not ask me. I seek only to spare both of us. I intrude, I know it. Even in these last moments of a delicious intercourse, I intrude. We must part without explanations, which would be agonizing to me, painful to us both. Your guests are on the threshold. I ask forgiveness. Good-bye!

Contessa. Signor Sarragossa, you distress me. We cannot part thus.

Sarragossa (*giving a quick look at the Contessa and then sotto voce*). One—two. (*Falls on one knee. His words become more and more rapid, till they are a torrent.*) Ah, Teresa, Teresa, little did I dream, while allowing my soul to sip the innocent nectar of friendship, that I was taking a poison into my bosom that would corrode, would grow to a burning conflagration, a holocaust of my whole being which, like a tornado,

ACT SECOND

a volcanic, infernal whirlwind of fire, would drive me reeling across the world. Look at me, Teresa! Let me carry that image with me into my desolation.

Contessa. Signor Sarragossa, control yourself.

Sarragossa. I will,—I will. (*Using his handkerchief.*) Ah! say you give me hope.

Contessa. I—I do not withhold it. Rise, my friend; they are coming. Rise quickly.

(*Sarragossa rises so quickly that he loses his balance, and sinks backward into the armchair, upon Fifi. When he feels his contact with the dog, he makes convulsive efforts to arrest the descent. A low prolonged squawk is heard, and then silence. Sarragossa has an impulse to rise, but retains his self-control.*)

Contessa. What was that?

Sarragossa (*after a superhuman effort*). Nothing. I heard nothing.

Contessa. It was like the cry of a young child.

Sarragossa. In times of deep emotion we hear sounds that are not. They are prefigurations,—embodiments,—mysteries, *Contessa*. When our ears are sharpened to the infinite—(*The sound of a plate breaking is heard. Both start violently, and the Contessa utters a slight scream. A pause. Then:*)

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Hippolito (announcing). Monsieur the Abbé Pandolfini.

Abbé. Ah! I am the first. It was intentional, *Madonna*. I have a word for you. (*She has moved toward the Abbé, keeping in line between the two men.*) What do you think? But you are moved. You are distressed. This incident is wearing upon your nerves. (*Offers to take her hand. She holds up her finger to the Abbé as she steps aside.*)

Contessa. Monsieur l'Abbé—Signor Sarragossa.

Abbé (aside). The brute has been annoying her. (*To Sarragossa.*) Good afternoon, Sarragossa. You are at home here, I see.

Sarragossa (feigning an attempt to rise and putting his hand to his back, as if in pain). Forgive me, Abbé: a touch of sciatica. In a moment it will be gone.

Abbé. Apoplexy! Apoplexy, my friend! You are seriously ill. You have had a seizure, an accés of some sort. I see it by your complexion.

Contessa (who is arranging the flowers, without looking round). Are you ill, Signor Sarragossa?

Sarragossa. Not in the least, *Contessa*. I demand pardon a thousand times. A mere spasm. In a moment I shall recover.

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Contessa. Monsieur l'Abbé, have you more news of Prince Teleky?

Abbé. Apropos, I hear he is a great amateur, and has already begun organizing a Shakespeare revival. Giacomo has seen him, and has joined the movement. (*Enter Angela, Lucia and Giacomo. Abbé to Giacomo.*) You must leave your Lucia for a moment and tell us about the new dramatic movement.

Giacomo. Why, the man is a great genius. (*He joins the Abbé and the Contessa, and continues to talk to them in dumb-show.*)

Angela (to Lucia.) I do not intend to look at my cousin when I am presented to him. It is enough if he looks at me. What a system! This is civilization! You expose the young woman to the glances of the young men for approval! This is delicacy. This is modesty. And this (*showing the poem, closely folded in her hand*)—this is sin. I will hold it in my hand like some sacred blossom, and smell of it during the interview.

Lucia. Do not overdo the part, or you will arouse suspicions.

Giacomo (looking out of the window). Bononcini is arriving!

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Contessa. Abbé, will you kindly take your place beside me? Angela and Lucia, there—that will do. Giacomo, you are not of the family. You can talk to Signor Sarragossa. (*He does so. Sarragossa greets him cordially, and explains his maladies in dumb-show.*)

Hippolito (announcing). Signor Hector Bononcini.

Enter Teleky. He is extremely ill at ease.

Contessa (to Teleky). Welcome, our cousin Hector, to Bologna.

We long have looked for you. I know your life,
If rumour tell the tithe of what is true,
Has not been all domestic; yet I dare
Throw open your ancestral hearth to you,
And bid you welcome. Welcome to Bologna.

Teleky (bows). I shall endeavour, aunt, to thank you rather

With conduct than with words; and if my life
Prove half so gracious as your greeting is,
I shall acquit me well.

Angela (to Lucia). Wheedling impostor. 'T is his latest rôle.

Contessa. These are my nieces. This is Angela.
I will not speak of business in this hour.
You know, your uncle was her uncle too;

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And in his will—

Teleky. Lady, I understand
The worldly history.

Contessa. This, my other niece,
Lucia. (*To Giacomo.*) Signor Giacomo, attend!
My niece Lucia's betrothed.

Teleky. Well met, and welcome.

Contessa. The Abbé Pandolfini.

Abbé. I am charmed.
(*To Contessa.*) A somewhat gloomy youth, I must confess.

Contessa. It seems to me completely natural
Considering his birth. He lacks the usages,
Like all his people. Shall we be humane
And leave him time to thaw? He's not so bad,
And certainly belies his reputation.

(*The Contessa and Abbé retire and occupy the sofa at the back. Giacomo and Lucia have occupied the sofa at the left. Angela and Teleky are thus left standing at the front of the stage, looking at each other's feet, in fidgety silence. They raise their eyes simultaneously, and Angela starts violently. They converse in stage whispers.*)

Angela. Who are you?

Teleky. One who wandered in the night,

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And found a star.

Angela. What brings you here?

Teleky. The power over all
That leads us to ourself.

Angela. You are my cousin?

Teleky. Lady, I dare not kneel. I am not he.

Angela. Thank God for that!

Teleky. But found his name a key
To let me through to all divinity.
My race is known; I am a gentleman,
And free in my estate to ask your hand.

Angela. Oh, bring it not in question, gentle youth.
Speak not of marriage. Did you know my name
When you did stand beneath the balcony?

Teleky. No more than angels know the name of God,
Feeling his influence.

Angela (aside). O guiding Heaven,
That steer'st the constant stars, break not this dream!
(*To Teleky.*) I would not, sir,
Have you misknow me. Many find me harsh;
For the embittered virgin only knows
What heat she hides. I pray you, sir, take heed.
If in this cup there is a drop of poison,
I shall go mad.

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Teleky. It is the wine of life
Flooding my soul; how can it poison yours?

Angela. Sir, I have longed to meet a human soul,
Dissociate from the trammels of this world,
The give and take of lies, the tinge of tact
And daily basenesses of daily life.
Tell me not who you are before I ask,
That I may keep you as a sacrament,
An unnamed wonder and a mystery,—
That birthright of each rough-hand peasant girl
That makes her glory.

Where two are housed within one sole disguise
And walk invisible, their souls may meet,
As if in heaven. I pray you, keep it so
Some little while, till we do know each other.

Teleky. It shall be as you will.

Angela. But we must show
A natural behaviour. (*Aloud.*) Cousin Hector,
How is it that we never heard from you?

Giacomo (to Lucia). Under this mild exterior! Ha, ha, ha! Beneath this sanctimonious, timid sobriety! Ha, ha, ha! A Lothario for Angela at last! Too good, too good. But he is a blessing; he will be the salvation of all of us. He must be spoon-fed and encouraged. (*Looks*

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toward Teleky.) Ah, you wicked Don Juan! (*Looks toward the Contessa.*) In our house!

Angela (rising, and to Lucia, who joins her). I find that our cousin has forgotten Bologna as completely as if he had never been here.

Lucia. Ah, indeed! Why then we shall have the opportunity of showing him all of our society as if he were a foreigner. (*Giacomo is approaching, still laughing inwardly.*)

Angela. We have the buildings—

Lucia. And the people—

Giacomo. And the University! (*Exploding and poking Teleky in the ribs.*) Ah, you wicked Don Juan!

Teleky. Signore!

Angela. For Heaven's sake, Giacomo!

Giacomo (in a low voice). Don't misunderstand me. I lay my life at the service of you both.

Contessa (to Abbé). I told you that if we left the young people to themselves they would soon become acquainted. They behave like old friends already. I am glad to see that Angela is acting like a lady.

Giacomo (to Teleky). In the first place, let me explain to you the individuals on the sofa. The lady ex-

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plains herself. You have only to continue as you have begun,—deference, humility, sadness. (*Explodes again and nudges him.*) Excuse me, I cannot help it. The Abbé, on her right, is a damnable roof-cat, who gets his living by stealing cold chicken livers. As for the family, you will have to read up a little. But let me tell you that your great-uncle Ludovic Bononcini was half brother to Joseph Maria Pozzi, or Pozzuoli. The Pozzi and the Bononcini have been allied for centuries. Some say that Sforza Pozzi came from Milan in the twelfth century, and was a contractor for building sewers. At any rate, the sewers are here. The arms are a spade fossant, and a man up to his knees in mud; but whether he is getting out of the mud, or going into the mud—that is the question.

(*Sarragossa has, during the foregoing proceedings, been sunk in profound melancholy. The audience must forget him. When Giacomo begins to talk about genealogy—and not before—Sarragossa, seeing that he is unobserved, reaches out his toe with the utmost stealth, and lifts the lid of the music-chest. He then gradually stands up, and is edging himself towards the chest, holding the dog behind his back, in his right hand. He has almost reached the place of safety, when Giacomo sees him, and imagines that he is coming forward to be presented.*)

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Giacomo. Ah! but I forgot our friend Signor Saragossa, an old family friend.

Sarragossa (*giving his left hand*). Delighted! Pardon,—rheumatism,—a martyr. Nevertheless, with my heart I extend all hands to you, my dear sir.

Hippolito (*putting his head in at the door*). Prince Teleky is coming up the steps! (*Everyone turns towards the door. Sarragossa seizes the moment to deposit the dog in the chest and shut the lid.*)

Sarragossa (*aside*). Safe! (*He arranges his collar mops his brow, and rests.*)

Hippolito (*announcing*). Prince Teleky.

Enter Hector in Hungarian costume.

Contessa (*curtsies*). Prince Teleky, your father was my friend

Many years since. I gladly would repay
Half his old kindnesses to me and mine
By welcome to his son. (*She extends her hand.*)

Hector. Is this enough? My father loaded me
With messages that wore a warmer tinge
(Sending me to your bosom as a son),
Which, with your modest leave, I will deliver. (*Offers to kiss her.*)

'Tis a Hungarian custom with old friends,

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And has a rustic beauty.

Contessa. Truly, sir,
If youth be your excuse, age shall be mine. (*Kisses him.*)

(*Aside.*) A more enchanting prince I never saw. (*She talks to the Prince.*)

Teleky (aside). What will he do? (*To Angela.*) My soul, my heart of love,
It hurts my honour thus to play a game
In which I steal a name from someone else.

Angela. Love, on your life, no more! Have you not sworn?

Would I for you not steal a vagrant name
Or act a drama? If you break the spell
Our happiness breaks too.

Contessa (introducing). My niece Angela, my niece Lucia. My cousin, Hector Bononcini—

Hector (to Contessa). Ah, Hector Bononcini. I have heard of him. Who has not? A breaker of hearts! A wild, turbulent fellow who has run through three fortunes and is now, they say, in search of a third. Most interested to meet him. (*Puts up an eyeglass, and examines Teleky.*)

Contessa. I leave you in good hands. (*She returns*

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to the door to greet Pietro and Rufredo and Bobo, who are arriving. Angela, Giacomo and Lucia talk together in dumb-show.)

Teleky (to Hector in a fierce whisper). This has gone far enough. Think who you are! What uniform you wear!

Hector (to Teleky, ditto). And do you remember that you are in the shoes of Hector Bononcini, who has the name of not being a milksop, and who doesn't enjoy looking like a sick calf.

Teleky (as before). No more Hungarian customs, if you please.

Hector. Why, you puppy, you may attend to your own affairs, I suppose. (*Teleky moves over and talks to the Abbé and Sarragossa, Hector to the young ladies and Giacomo.*)

Hector. Long have I hoped to have this happiness, For, you must know, Bologna is a place

That throws its shadows out like fairy land

O'er our imagination in the North.

Its wealth, its beauty, its romantic name,—

This lady will forgive me that I know

She is a cynosure to venturous barks—

Angela (to Hector). Your pardon, sir, I see my aunt requires me. Did she not,

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I still should flee from such impertinence. (*Angela joins the Contessa.*)

Hector (*to Giacomo and Lucia*). Well, how goes it?

Giacomo. Lightning and gunpowder. They have been standing like two dying swans that sing madrigals to each other. They were in love at first sight yesterday, and to-day they are swimming in the madness of bliss.

Hector. Why, the thing is done! He has only to declare himself and offer her his hand in honourable marriage. I shall return to Paris to-night, and wait there till I learn that Angela is safely married.

Giacomo. No, no, no!

Lucia. Honourable offers of marriage are poison to her.

Giacomo. She would throw him over! She would discover that he was a fortune-hunter and a worldling.

Lucia. You do not know my sister!

Giacomo. We have had three years of her! Be advised by us. She must never know that he is a good parti till she is firmly engaged to him.

Hector. But how,—but how? He will declare himself.

Giacomo. Beseech him not to.

Hector. But how,—but how?

Lucia. They must elope.

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Giacomo. It would help greatly if you could make love to her.

Lucia. Apply for her hand to our aunt.

Hector. It might be done. There is nothing between me and my happiness except the will of this obstinate girl. She shall elope!

Giacomo. It must be done, my friend; it is our only chance.

Hector. Wait, wait! We must have something to facilitate an elopement,—some grand diversion,—something upsetting and extraordinary. I have it. Theatricals! They are my rôle. We will give a Shakespearean performance. We will all meet here to-morrow afternoon. If there is anything that stimulates disorder and unreason, it is private theatricals. It shall all be impromptu. I will bring the actors and the costumes. It shall be a surprise party. You get Teleky invited to stay in the house, and leave the rest to me.

Giacomo. Divine!

Lucia. Inspired! Come, shall we have some music now? I will organize it. (*She crosses the room.*) Monsieur l'Abbé, will you not play my accompaniment? (*At the suggestion of music Sarragossa has pricked up his ears.*)

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Sarragossa. Ah, music! How enchanting! I will find the songs. (*He occupies the music-chest and fumbles in it, pulling out songs and offering them to Lucia.*) Which will you have, mademoiselle? “Dove Sono”—“Porgi Amor”?

Lucia. None of those. Let me find it.

Sarragossa. Not for the world. I insist.

Lucia. It is at the bottom,—a red cover.

Sarragossa. At the bottom—at the bottom. Here it is. (*Hands it to her.*)

Abbé (*taking his seat at the harpsichord. To Sarragossa.*) Are you all right again?

Sarragossa. Pretty well, pretty well. (*Sits on the music-chest. Lucia sings an old Italian melody. At the close there is a buzz of approval: “Charming,” “How sweet,” &c. People move about. Teleky and Angela thus find themselves together on a sofa. The Abbé is playing soft, preliminary chords, and Lucia is occupied in examining a page of music.*)

Angela (*to Teleky*). Sir, I have kept your verses in my bosom.

Teleky. I was ashamed to send them.

Angela. A great flash
As of Apollo’s lyre rings out of them.
You are a poet.

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Teleky. No, sweet saint, a lover.

(She takes his hand, but quickly withdraws her own.)

Angela. All things begin to beckon and to move.
The lilting cadence of that sweet old song,
Which yesterday was threadbare, seems to stir
The sleeping roots of some surrounding music.
Do you not feel it? It is everywhere.

Teleky. I feel the power of a great command
Behind my being.

Angela. This familiar room
Was empty, strange, and hostile till to-day,
And all these genial people, enemies.
To think such new worlds live within the old
And we not find them! Think you that Lucia
Takes the habitual ecstasy for granted,—
Or does not feel it?

(The song is about to begin when enter Hippolito in great excitement.)

Hippolito. Signora, Fifi has disappeared! *(The Abbé makes a discord. Sarragossa starts violently, but regains his composure.)* I have searched everywhere.

Contessa. Fifi, my Fifi! My beloved Fifi!

Hippolito. A strange individual has been seen lurking beneath the balcony to-day. Now he is no longer

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there, and Fifi has disappeared!

Contessa. Bobo, run at once to the police.

Hippolito. The necklace alone is worth forty scudi.

(Great excitement and confusion, everyone making suggestions at once. Exit Hippolito.)

Hector. Your ladyship will permit me to accompany our young friend to the police. I may be of some service.

Contessa. Ah, Prince, how kind of you.

Hector. The animal will be found of course. (*To Lucia.*) But it is a pity our song should be spoiled. (*He makes his adieu, bowing distantly to Angela. The other guests prepare to go.*)

Sarragossa. It will be found of course. (*Aside.*) It will be found, and its condition will be evidence against me,—crushing evidence. (*Sinks into thought.*)

Contessa (to Teleky). A sad contretemps, signor; but I must call you Hector. Adieu till to-morrow. We shall expect you to move to us from your inn in the morning.

Sarragossa (making his adieu). Ah, my dear friend, what anguish! Call on me for anything.

Contessa. Thank you, my friend.

Sarragossa (going). Have I your permission to bor-

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row that beautiful song “Amore Segreto”?

Contessa. Certainly,—anything.

(Pietro and Rufredo are now making their adieus. Sarragossa approaches the music-chest, his face towards the audience, his back towards the group. He pulls the dog from the box, and rolls it up in a song. The head sticks out. He rolls it up in another way. The tail sticks out. He mops his forehead. He glances behind him. Suddenly, by a bold movement, he swings the dog into the breast of his coat, puts a roll of music under his arm, and steers himself towards the door.)

Sarragossa (aside). Courage, Rinaldo Sarragossa!

[*Exit.*]

Angela (aside). Till to-morrow!

[*Exit with a tragic gesture by a wing.*]

Lucia (to Giacomo). What a tea-party!

Giacomo (to Lucia). I did not dare to look at her.

[*Exeunt by a wing. The Contessa sits down and puts her handkerchief to her eyes. The Abbé poses near to console her.*]

Contessa. My poor Fifi.

Abbé. Ah, indeed.

Contessa. On any day but this!

Abbé. Ah, indeed.

Contessa. Some malignant influence is in the air

ACT SECOND

to-day. Everything happens strangely. My nerves are affected. I fear something.

Abbé. I feel it myself.

Enter, with mystery, Hippolito.

Hippolito. Madame!

Abbé. } What is it?
Contessa. }
 } What!

Hippolito. It is not he!

Abbé. } What!
Contessa. }
 } What!

Hippolito. Signor Hector—is not—Signor Hector!

Abbé. What do you mean?

Hippolito. It is not the boy! It is not Hector!

Abbé. Come, come, Hippolito, you have not seen him for fifteen years.

Contessa (to Abbé). Hippolito is affected, like the rest.

Hippolito. Ah, signora, I not know my little Hector! (*Coming very near and raising his voice.*) But I would know the scar on his ear, would I not? This one has the ears of an ourang-outang!

Contessa (utters a slight scream). Abbé, it is a conspiracy!

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Hippolito. I would swear it, I would swear it! Bring me before the court of justice! I asked him if he remembered breaking his leg in the tank. Could a boy forget that? He fled, madame. He fled—he fled.

(Hippolito sidles across the room as he says this, imitating criminal flight. The Countess is terrified by the exhibition, and almost puts her hand on the Abbé's shoulder as she watches it.)

Abbé. We are in the presence of something monstrous,—something overshadowing. But put your trust in me. I will protect you.

ACT III

SCENE FIRST

THE ROOM AT THE INN

Hector, Giacomo, Pietro, Rufredo, Sarragossa and Andrea. The room is in confusion. Stage properties are lying about,—hats, wigs, costumes, boots and trumpery. Hector is sitting before a table covered with papers; as he talks he makes memoranda upon his lists.

HECTOR. A most inspiring session. (*Looks at his watch.*) But we must break up. Signor Sarragossa, you will be responsible for the wigs and swords. Here is a list of them. Giacomo, you will see to these details. We must have a few extra costumes: they are sure to be needed. Cinque-cento is the safest.

Giacomo. Scipio, in the old market, has a doge's costume of the trecento which is very fine.

Hector. Excellent. Let's have it.

Sarragossa. There must be blood on Cæsar's toga: mind you that. I cannot do it without the blood.

Hector. See to it, Giacomo; red ink will do. Spare no expense: the public demands it. Pietro, you insist on Othello?

Pietro. Othello suits my physique. I have never acted anything else.

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Hector. Good.—Rufredo?

Rufredo. Shylock, please.

Hector. Certainly.—Giacomo?

Giacomo. Oh, a fool, one of the fools, any fool.

Hector. Good. Bobo will prompt. Teleky and Angela are provided for,—Romeo and Juliet. (*Laughter.*)

Giacomo. The worse he acts, the better it will be. It is going to be thrilling.

Hector. But you must all go now. I have only time to throw the lines together. Good-bye till three o'clock. Signor Sarragossa, I congratulate you. As Mark Antony you are great.

Sarragossa (*who has been barnstorming in dumb-show*). It is the passion of my life!

Pietro. Till three o'clock.

Giacomo. }
Rufredo. } Good-bye.

[*Exeunt Giacomo, Pietro, Rufredo and Sarragossa.*]

Hector (*to Andrea*). It will be a unique performance; I am going to let every man take his favourite part. Sarragossa would make a splendid Iago, but he insists on Mark Antony.

Andrea. He was magnificent. He makes my blood

ACT THIRD

run cold.—But, signor, why these distractions?

Hector. They are not distractions. They are business, you blockhead. I am building a bridge. I shall march back to Paris across it, and find my Julia at the end. Andrea, beneath all the external gaiety I am thinking of her. Ah, to see her again!

Andrea. You will see her very soon.

Hector (dreamily). You think so, Andrea?

Andrea. She is in Bologna.

Hector. Murder and sudden death! How do you know it? Why didn't you tell me before?

Andrea. I did not know it before. I saw her pass the window half an hour ago, in a calèche. She stopped at the hotel; she made inquiries; she passed on. The signori were here.

Hector. Put up those things! Get my valises ready! No, I will not fly; in fact I cannot. Had I but twenty-four hours more! But it can be done, even now. It can be finished before she overtakes me. If only that ass Teleky were a man! But no; he is all honour and sentiment! He will not elope—he! He is too high-minded to take advantage of a young girl—the sickly sonneteer! He *shall* elope! Giacomo is right. I must apply for her hand. Let him look to his laurels when I take the field against him!

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Andrea. Sorrows of the saints, my master! What excitement are you in?

Hector. Go, you skulking clod, and watch below. If there is any sign of that calèche, report it. (*Exit Andrea, shaking his head and wringing his hands.*) I have one drama to write,—another to enact.

(*Sits down and writes.*)

“Madam, it is with a beating heart that I make known to you the true purpose of my journey to Bologna. This was to assure myself of the respect of your niece Signorina Angela, and to have knowledge of her excellence and beauty, before making a formal application for her hand. Have knowledge (*correcting the page*)—independent of report—concerning her excellence and beauty. My friend has just informed me of the gaieties which he is instituting for this afternoon at your palazzo; and it will give me the greatest pleasure to pay my homage to you and to the young lady at the time appointed.” Now for a fair copy. (*Takes another sheet. Copies and talks.*) By this letter the mind of the Contessa will be unsettled. The Contessa will prefer the Prince to the Cousin. The Contessa may be counted on to do something which will irritate Angela and insult Teleky. Good. Somehow I don’t like signing another man’s name. But how else

ACT THIRD

save him? (*Signs.*) "Stephen Teleky." (*Enter Andrea with a note which Hector opens, turning to the signature.*) From Lucia. (*Reads.*) "Courage and firmness! My aunt and the Abbé have grown suspicious. They are planning to ask questions. They doubt the identity. I think Hippolito is at the bottom of it. Use discretion. Above all act quickly. Lucia."

Hector. All will be lost! Andrea, who brought this note?

Andrea. A private servant, signor.

Hector. Send him up! (*Exit Andrea. Enter Hippolito. Hector looks narrowly at him.*) So it seems that something unpleasant has occurred.

Hippolito. Yes, your highness.

Hector. Some doubts?

Hippolito. Yes, your highness.

Hector. Some disbelief? The signorina tells me that you know something about this.

Hippolito. There is no doubt. It is not he. I swear it! Produce me!

Hector. The other was younger.

Hippolito. Yes, your highness.

Hector. Handsomer.

Hippolito. Yes, your highness.

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Hector. Gayer, wittier, more full of jokes, tricks, escapades, runnings away, fallings down, and jellies in the pantry.

Hippolito. You knew him! O Prince, he was an angel. I weep when I think of him. He climbed the apple tree—

Hector. Above the tank—

Hippolito. And fell and broke his leg—

Hector. And was four weeks at old Hippolito's farmhouse getting well!

Hippolito. Is your highness a magician?

Hector. Do you not know me, Hippolito?

Hippolito. What! O heavens, heavens! It is my little Hector. (*Embraces him. Then with sudden suspicion.*) No, no, I will not be deceived twice. Let me see the ear! (*Examines it.*) It is he, it is he! (*Pats and strokes Hector. Again, with sudden suspicion.*) And the other?

Hector. My friend! My comrade, who is to wed Signorina Angela. It is all a joke between us. He is one of the greatest princes of Europe, and one of the worst actors. It is all a joke, Hippolito. But we could n't deceive *you*, Hippolito.

Hippolito. As if anyone could deceive me about my little Hector!

ACT THIRD

Hector. But you must keep the secret, or the match will be ruined. You must help us. You must identify him. You must—embrace him!

Hippolito. I cannot. He is too cold.

Hector. You *must*, Hippolito. You must pet him and call him love-names. (*Hippolito makes a wry face.*) And everything he says, you must corroborate. And everything *you* say, *he* must corroborate.

Hippolito. I will try, signor.

Hector. Everything depends upon it. Hippolito, you are intelligent: I will explain to you. Our Signorina Angela is romantic.

Hippolito (rolling his eyes). Ah, signor.

Hector. Poetical.

Hippolito. Ah, signor.

Hector. Ecstatic, mystic, living in the world of dreams—

Hippolito (wiping his eye with his sleeve). She is indeed.

Hector. She is in love with this friend of mine, dead in love, melting, molten, disgustingly in love. Did you ever see such love?

Hippolito. Yes, indeed.

Hector. And he is in love with her.

Hippolito. With those cold manners!

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Hector. Yes, he is, Hippolito. He is frozen into a paralysis of Hungarian love.

Hippolito (seeing light). A-a-a-ah!?

Hector. And now Angela demands a robber to carry her off. Nothing else will satisfy her.

Hippolito. A-a-a-ah!?

Hector. They must rise and fly. Hippolito, you have seen the way they make pheasants rise? Yes. They drive them forward and backward with hue and cry (*suits action to words*). The pheasants run between the beaters' legs and hide in the underbrush. What then? They erect a fence in the underbrush and drive the pheasants towards it. Up go the pheasants. (*Gesture.*) So it is to be with these lovers. I am driving them backwards and forwards till they become exasperated and exhausted. Then, up and away they will go!

Hippolito (in ecstasy). A-a-a-ah!!

Hector. I have a sort of chari-vari this afternoon at the Contessa's, to stir them about with,—to make life exciting for them,—to show them that Bologna is not the place for them. It is not quiet in Bologna. It is tumultuous. You understand?

Hippolito. Oh, my master, this is like the olden days.

Hector. Now you must make all things go smoothly.

ACT THIRD

No matter what happens, say that Signor Hector has ordered it so. Ha, ha, ha!

Hippolito. Ha, ha, ha!

Hector. And can you manage to have a chaise and pair waiting all the afternoon in the back alley? Something may come of it. It will simplify matters to have the carriage in waiting.

Hippolito. Of course.

Hector. Now go quickly. Someone is coming up the stairs. Stay! A letter for the Contessa. (*Gives it to him.*) Above all remember to fawn upon—upon the other Hector.

(*Hippolito is going out. Enter Teleky, shrouded in deepest gloom.*)

Hippolito (looks at *Teleky* with disgust and says beseechingly to *Hector*). Not this time, signor.

Hector. No, not this time; but next time.

[*Exit Hippolito. Teleky goes to a chair and sits down.*

Hector. Well?

Teleky (*says nothing*).

Hector. Well?

Teleky (*says nothing*).

Hector. Well, was it your girl?

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Teleky. You know it was.

Hector. Then what have you to complain of?

Teleky. Of what are you Italians not capable! A civilization of mountebanks! I have come to break with it. I owe you no allegiance, but I would not break my word except upon an explanation. I shall declare myself. I have lived in torture since I met you. I am become an object of suspicion; a mystery in the drawing-room, a jest in the servants' hall, a sinister figure to myself. I am not fitted for these brutalities. You will, sir, take notice that the jest is ended; and a little later I shall look to you for the reparation usual among gentlemen.

Hector. Go on.

Teleky. I have finished.

Hector. Am I to understand that this is a challenge?

Teleky. You are, sir.

Hector. Very good. I hold myself in readiness. Nevertheless, you will permit me to make one or two observations with the hope that they may have some significance in that higher civilization to which you belong.

Teleky. As you will.

Hector. I ask you to observe that I bear a relation of some responsibility to the household into which you

ACT THIRD

have been introduced. You are a stranger whose whole reputation here depends upon my word. You have, through me, been enabled to continue an intrigue, and carry it I know not how far, or with what consequence to the heart and reputation of a young lady who is my cousin.

Teleky. Sir!

Hector. I say, sir, that there are other possible causes for a duel between you and me besides those which you name. Are your intentions honourable?

Teleky. How dare you speak of honour! You know they are honourable. You know that what grieves me most in all this is that I see the sanctity of a young lady's nature being exposed to outrage.

Hector. Through whom?

Teleky. Her soul exposed to vulgar ridicule.

Hector. Through whom?

Teleky. I do not excuse myself. I am grievously to blame. But it shall finish.

Hector. Through marriage?

Teleky. Through marriage.

Hector (*grasps his hand*). My dear fellow, I congratulate you. I knew I could not be mistaken in you. The young lady consents?

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Teleky. Not exactly.

Hector. Not exactly? But it is an occasion where exactitude is required.

Teleky. When I propose it she sheers away, as if the time for decisions had not yet come. God forgive me that I tell you this.

Hector. Why, my dear friend! Come, you are worn out. You people of the North are all fire and brimstone, and burn yourselves to ashes. You do not understand us in Italy. Come, sit down. You are in love. You need help and council, not duels; and if there was ever a man fitted to give you honest aid,—a man who wants to see you honestly married to this girl,—it is Hector Bononcini. You believe that?

Teleky. I try to believe it. But in your carnival game I feel that I am somehow one of the pieces. I should not be wholly surprised if I found that you were trying to marry the girl yourself. There, I confess it.

Hector. Good. But would she marry me? No—you are sure of that. Sit down. You need a glass of wine. (*Pours one out.*) Now let me talk to you. She will not marry anybody. (*Teleky starts.*) You are a foreigner. Now let me tell you that there exists in Italy

ACT THIRD

a well-known type of woman whose romanticism—precludes marriage. Do not be startled—precludes the ordinary forms, modes, fuss, and machinery of social unions. Had you been an Italian, you would have understood this instinctively. You would have been over the back-yard wall and in Venice together by this time,—married on the way.

Teleky. The thought is revolting to me. “Over the back-yard wall,” like a criminal.

Hector. Do not be critical. You are in the presence of a natural phenomenon. If you insist on etiquette and convention, you will become the last rejected suitor of *la Furia di Bologna*. It is her weakness, her fate, her calamity. How have you won her thus far but by obedience to the higher law of her nature?

Teleky (mutters). It is true.

Hector. She clings to you. She fears that you will betray her, as the rest have done. She is *Andromeda* on the rock waiting for her *Perseus*. Are you he? Or will you break into visiting-cards and worldly wisdom, into lands, houses and titles? She is rich; there is the poison. Oh, the poison of money! It corrupts everyone. It has left a sort of wound of insanity on her. There is no denying this: it is true.

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Teleky. Even so, I cannot bring myself to play upon her weakness.

Hector (shrugs). Now, my dear Stephen, do as you please. Declare yourself and leave her broken-hearted, if you must. You have your own nature and destiny, your prevailing passion for honour and uprightness,—which seems to me as insane as her own fantasia,—but I cannot control either of you. There, go. I am engaged in throwing together a drama, and I have troubles of my own.

Teleky (takes his hand sadly). Thank you, my friend. (*Going.*)

Hector. Oh, by the way, we are going to have a little entertainment at the Contessa's this afternoon,—a very usual thing in Italy. You might mention it to the Contessa when you see her. You are cousin and so forth. It's a surprise party, but they might want to prepare something to eat.

Teleky. More of the inferno?

Hector (in his ear, with great energy). Get out of it!

[*Exit Teleky.*]

Enter Andrea.

Hector. All safe?

Andrea. Nothing, signor.

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Hector. Andrea, have you a copy of Shakespeare's plays about you?

Andrea. Signore?

Hector. It might be safer, after all, if I wrote at the library. And, Andrea, I shall not return before evening. You must lock the doors and keep yourself in this room. I will have your supper sent up. You may have seen an apparition. At any rate it is safer so. Roll up those dresses; I will send for them. It is better so, much better. [Takes his hat and exit.

Andrea. The coward! (*Lurches distractedly about the room collecting costumes.*) What are these revels, these wild companions? The Hungarian is a weakling, that's plain. They don't play cards, yet I am sure my master is robbing him. And Donna Julia—the black-hearted scoundrel!—Shakespeare—have I a copy of Shakespeare! He writes all day. (*Approaches the table and fumbles the papers; finds the draft letter to the Contessa, stares, takes it up, goes into dumfounded amazement, throws up his hands to heaven.*) Ah, the malefactor! He is seeking to marry another woman. The burglar! The traitor! Ah, Donna Julia, Donna Julia. (*Knocking at the door. Andrea starts, puts back the paper. More knocking. Andrea feigns sleep and snores. More*

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

knocking. Andrea feigns awakening.) Who's that?

Julia (without). Let me in!

Andrea (aside). Her voice! (*Aloud.*) No one is at home.

Julia (without). Let me in, Andrea! Let me in!

Andrea. No, Donna Julia. You cannot come in. I am not—I am not dressed.

Julia (without). Then you will have time to dress while I am summoning people to break down the door.

Andrea. Patience, signora. I am coming. I have orders to admit no one.

Julia (without). But that does not include me!

Andrea. Of course not. Why did I not think of that?

(*Unlocks door. Enter Julia. She is handsome, fat and much dressed. She pulls off her gloves and throws them down, arranges her hair at a mirror, &c.*)

Julia. They denied he was here, downstairs, and gave me some trouble. He must have bought new clothes in Bologna. How is my Hector? Has he been much fatigued by those lawyers?

Andrea. Lawyers, madame?

Julia. He told me it was lawyers he must see. Who

ACT THIRD

are they? I must see them myself, privately, and find out.

Andrea. Lawyers, madame?

Julia. Yes, idiot!

Andrea. My master has seen no lawyers in Bologna.

Julia. What! Who has he seen?

Andrea. Gentlemen, ladies, the nobility, the fashion, the gay world.

Julia. His family?

Andrea. Yes, signora. (*Under pretence of doing up the bundle he is exposing the costumes.*)

Julia. There were ladies,—something about a will,—two old maids.

Andrea. Old maids?

Julia. What's the matter with the man? What are those things? Wigs? Costumes? (*She pulls open the bundle and throws the things about.*)

Andrea. A masquerade, signora.

Julia. He is going to a masquerade?

Andrea. He is organizing them.

Julia. Organizing masquerades in Bologna? (*With sudden fury.*) Who is she? Who is the woman? Tell me, or I will choke you to death. (*She seizes him by the throat and drags him about the room.*) I knew it, I

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

guessed it, I dreamed it, I felt it in my anatomy. Every bone ached with it when he left me. He is deserting me, and has not the courage to tell me so. Give me her name, or I will tear you to pieces! You are his accomplice! Give me her name.

Andrea. Help! Mercy! Patience, signora!

Julia. He is as lewd as a monkey, a chameleon, a dastardly sot. Tell me her name!

Andrea. Mercy!

Julia. He has ruined more women than he has hairs on his head. But the avenger is on his track! Tell me the hussey's name! (*Shakes him till his teeth chatter.*)

Andrea (*gulping and sputtering*). Pardon, mercy, forgive, let me speak. Signora, calm yourself! (*Every time he says one of these things, she shakes him more violently. At last she throws him to the floor.*)

Julia. Well, will you speak?

Andrea. Give me a moment—water—where am I?—on the table. It is not what you think.

Julia. Water? Where is it?

Andrea. On the table,—the letter—the letter—(*Julia at last finds the draft letter, reads it and screams.*)

Julia. Marriage! He fled from Paris like a thief in the night to marry, to marry! He leaves me like a

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broken toy! But I will find him! I will tear his eyes from his head! Andrea, you helped him escape!

Andrea (on his knees, his clasped hands in the air).
No, signora! I swear by the seven sacraments.

Julia. But if you did I'll rip you up like an old shoe. You gave him the parcel?

Andrea. Yes, signora.

Julia. What did he say?

Andrea. He laughed. He said you might follow him, but you should not find him till his business in Bologna was finished.

Julia. Furies of Satan! Can you find him?

Andrea. I think so, signora.

Julia (sinks on a chair gesticulating, muttering and biting her nails). I will find him, I will find him!

SCENE SECOND

THE CONTESSA'S BOUDOIR

Teleky and Angela.

ANGELA. What shall I call thee? For no name seems best

But Orpheus, the singing troubadour
That trod the slippery path from Erebus

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

And drew his bride behind. His godlike head
Beshone the jagged vaultings of the night,
Gilding the groins,—till Pluto's architect
Sees his own work.

Teleky. Nay, but he lost her.

Angela. How much one moment throws its meaning back

On all the years before it! All my griefs
Seem to have been a childish kind of sport.

Teleky. Beware of looking back, Eurydice!

Angela. I felt a kind of pain in meeting men,
As if I were a chattel. Yet within,
I longed to know them. Orpheus, with you,
All is a journey of discovery;
Nor pain, nor doubt, nor conquest of myself,
But all oblation. Say that we agree
That you, in God's own time, shall marry me.

Teleky. Say we agree in all, why not in this?
You, when I begged it, put the gift away,
Which now you offer.

Angela. Hush, I hear a step.

Enter Lucia.

Lucia. If I may enter, I have news for you.

Angela. Lucia, of all the sisters in the world

ACT THIRD

Thou art the faithfulest. I could not wish,
Being alone, that thou shouldst not be by;
Or being left with one who is myself,
Thou shouldst not enter.

I am affianced to this gentleman.

Lucia. God give you joy—and you, my newest
brother!

Angela. Give us thy counsel now, my sweet Lucia,
Who hast a hand in all things. Yesterday
I could not bear the thought of speedy marriage.
To-morrow I could wed.

Lucia. You are too cold,
Too sour-green and backward in the bud,
Thus to reward Love's years of adoration
With promise of to-morrow. Wed to-day!

Angela. If I do blush, you are the cause of it.

Lucia. blushes are flags of truce; or, better said,
The cheeks they leave are such.
But come, halt, consider, reflect, hearken.

Angela. What?

Teleky. What?

Lucia. Are you calm? First, sir, you are under sus-
picion.

Teleky. I know—Hippolito.

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Lucia. There is to be an examination, an inquest.

Teleky. How?

Lucia. A tribunal.

Teleky. I, before a tribunal?

Lucia. Nonsense! Explain to him, Angela. It's the simplest thing in the world. When Hippolito asks him if he remembers the red cat,—he must remember the red cat. That is all.

Angela (to Teleky). Sweet one, you can play a harmless game, a joke, since we are in it?

Teleky. I will try. (*Sighs heavily.*)

Lucia. There! But now for the real news! The Prince has made a formal application for the hand of Angela.

Angela. I knew it would come! It is a disease of mankind. Of course the Prince applies. It is a joke too—a game too. O my beloved, take it not so seriously. What do we care?

Teleky. When did he do this?

Lucia. Just now.

Teleky. Inexplicable! He does not mean it!

Angela (to Lucia). Leave us, Lucia; I will explain to him.

Lucia (at the door, to Angela). If you will take a

ACT THIRD

hint from me,—there is to be such a tempest of folly here this afternoon as the world has not seen since the Tower of Babel. In the midst of it, you and the poet could slip off to Venice, and be no more noticed than a pair of sparrows in an earthquake. Think of it, Angela. (*Exit Lucia. Re-enter Lucia. To Angela.*) The carriage is ordered. It is to be in waiting in the alley.

[*Exit Lucia.*]

Angela (to Teleky). My own, why does this downcast you? I have had offers of marriage that brought me distress; but this one brings me only amusement. And besides, besides, this one will never be considered, for, before the time comes for the answer, Orpheus, my Orpheus, will have carried me out of Hades. You will run off with me to Venice this afternoon.

Teleky. Spirit of my life, I would not marry you
As if you were a weak backsliding nun
That with her lover scales a convent wall.
All we have felt is true; yet in this world
Are shrines of truth beside the shrines we build.

Angela (with sudden suspicion). What say you?

Teleky. My father is a prince of Hungary,
And for a thousand years our house has wed
Beneath the spreading sanction of the Church.

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Angela (with rising anger). What mean you?

Teleky. I speak not for myself, but for my race.
A proud, old, feeble father,—loving me,
And counting it dishonour and reproach
To take the backward road to anything.

Angela. You are a prince! You came here in disguise!

Teleky. Yes,—yes,—yes,—yes.

Angela. But all must be conventional and smooth.
You would not tread except upon red carpet.

Teleky. No,—no, no, no. You do not understand.

Angela. You have a father and a history,
Titles and lands.

But ready cash?

These princely lovers are not rich in cash.

Teleky. Eight thousand golden florins every month
To squander if I will.

Angela. It was not for my money?

Teleky. Patient God,

Deliver what I strive to say to her!

I cannot reach her.

Angela. You are one of them!
Owned by possessions, minions to their names,
Appendages to paltry histories,

ACT THIRD

Who crawl about till they perpetuate
The line they worship. O my God, my God!
Go, sir! You cannot know what you have done.
Go! I am breaking. Leave me. Send Lucia.
And I who thought that I had found a man!

Teleky. Eurydice!

Angela. Go, go, I say! How dare you say the word?
Your manhood is a kind of poetry,
But you yourself are nothing. Go, go, go!
You are a fringe upon a robe of state,
But not a man. Go wear your titles out,
And drag your frippery about the world
With one who is your equal. (*Sits down and sobs, using her handkerchief.*)
And I who thought that I had found a man!
The walls are closing in! I must not weep
In public with a foreign prince to see.
Go and report that the Italian girls
Are very fond in love—you found them so.
To think a lath like you can break a heart!
Go, go, go! Leave me, leave me alone,
And use your gentle breeding to forget me.
Repeat it not—you are a gentleman.

Teleky. Eurydice!

Angela. Ah, Orpheus! Forgive me, forgive me!

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

My Orpheus, will you forgive me?

(She falls on his neck and embraces him with as much fervour as can be shown on the stage, saying, "Forgive me, forgive me." She continues to weep and to kiss him, until the poor man is limp, wet and dishevelled.)

Forgive me, love, it shall be as you say.

Teleky. Nay, you shall have your way, my darling girl.

It is the way to save you.

Angela. Let it go—

I can go through with all.

Teleky. But so can I.

Let us regain ourselves, my beautiful;
Let us regain the sphere of central light,
Going or staying.

Angela. There spoke my Orpheus!
The Abbé and my aunt are coming here.
We must escape. Go to the garden, dear.

[Exeunt severally by different doors.]

Enter the Contessa, the Abbé and Bobo, in earnest talk.

Bobo. So we went to the prefect of the police together, and I introduced the Prince to the prefect and described Fifi, and the prefect was most kind. There have been several robberies in this neighbourhood

ACT THIRD

lately. The prefect has given orders to have the palazzo watched by his best men for several days. He thinks that this theft may be merely the prelude to some more important robbery.

Contessa. Good heavens, Bobo! The palazzo under police supervision?

Abbé. Calm yourself, dear madame, you are in good hands.

Bobo. It appears that the most ambitious and resourceful criminals sometimes disguise themselves as gentlefolk and thus gain an entry into the houses of rich people; and when they have gained knowledge, and being free from all suspicion—

Abbé (to Contessa, raising his hand). What did I tell you?

Contessa. This is terrifying.

Abbé. We must take Bobo into our confidence. Bobo, after the prince had left us last night a serious thing occurred,—yes, I say it, serious. And had not I, by the grace of Heaven, been present—

Bobo. What, Abbé?

Abbé. Hippolito fails to identify Hector as Hector. Hippolito declares that the individual who is now walking in the garden with Angela is an unknown

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person. Hippolito swears it, by certain signs and marks known to himself.

Bobo. With Angela!

Abbé. An impostor!

Bobo. Horrible!

Abbé. Softly, softly. I have been talking to the Contessa of the necessity of assuring ourselves before taking any action. We must confront the false Hector with Hippolito in *pleno consilio*.

Bobo. When?

Abbé. Now. Bobo, would you kindly step into the garden, and ask the individual if—if he could kindly step this way. The Contessa would be obliged. And, on your way back, would you call up Hippolito and give him a hint as to why he is wanted. He'll come willingly enough, I warrant.

Bobo. Certainly. I will remain with Angela.

[*Exit Bobo.*]

Abbé. Rely upon me, madame. I have conducted many examinations.

Contessa. There is a providence in it all, Abbé, and in this demand from the Prince. Think now, just as we discover—as perhaps we may—that we have been imposed upon by a criminal,—and people will talk,

ACT THIRD

you know,—just as poor Angela has this humiliation, her hand is sought in marriage by the hereditary grand standard-bearer of the Hungarian monarchy. It is Providence, Abbé!

Abbé. By sagacious management, madame, by insight and the ability to unravel mysteries—(*Enter Teleky. To Teleky, with pomposity.*) Good evening, sir. Will you have the goodness to bestow upon us some few moments of your time? (*He has seated himself and the Contessa, as it were, in seats of judgement, leaving Teleky to stand.*) It has become my duty, sir, to inform you that certain doubts have arisen in the household concerning your—ah—identity. And you will not think it unreasonable, I know, after so long an absence, if you are given an opportunity to, ah, to set them at rest,—set them at rest. As an old friend of the family—

Teleky. Certainly, signor. (*Bows and fidgets. Enter Hippolito.*)

Hippolito. Madame desires me?

Abbé. Hippolito, will you kindly state over again what you said to the Contessa and to myself last evening as to the identity of Signor Hector.

Hippolito. I, Monsieur l'Abbé?

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Contessa. What you said about not recognizing him.

Hippolito. I, signora?

Abbé. About the ear.

Contessa. About his running away.

Hippolito. About his running away? Ah, Signor Hector, as if he could run away from his old Hippolito! I have loved him since he was so high. My little Hector! I not know my little Hector! (*He approaches Teleky and fawns upon him.*) Pardon, signor, it is true there was a scar on his ear. Behold it!

Contessa. And the tank—

Hippolito. The tank? Did you not fall in the tank?

Teleky (*with extreme effort*). I did.

Hippolito. And came to stay with Hippolito at the farmhouse?

Teleky. In winter time.

Hippolito. Ah, ah! Of course, in winter time.

Teleky. And helped with the olives.

Hippolito. The olives! He made himself sick on them.

Teleky. And there was a red cat.

Hippolito. And seven small kittens that he saved from drowning, and nursed in his hat,—the tender-hearted child! I weep when I remember it.

ACT THIRD

Contessa (*to Abbé*). Abbé, you are wrong. He is Hector.

Abbé (*to Contessa*). It is a conspiracy; Hippolito has been bribed. (*To Hippolito with great vehemence.*) Did you not say last night that this gentleman was not Hector Bononcini?

Hippolito. I, Monsieur l'Abbé? I was so excited at the thought of seeing him that I know not what I may have said.

Contessa. Abbé, we have wronged our kinsman. Hector, the flighty conduct of an old servant has led to our doing you almost an outrage. You will forgive us under the circumstances, will you not? (*Teleky bows.*)

Hippolito. Ah, my little Hector, that I should have been the cause of giving you embarrassment! (*To Contessa.*) He has told me all the things that ever we did together since he was four years old. He has recalled my younger days, and Signor Bononcini, your husband's benevolence when the three of us went to the village together.

Contessa. Hippolito, you are a good soul, you may go. (*Exit Hippolito.*) Hector, I thank you for your forbearance. Really, Abbé, I think you owe him an apology.

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Abbé. Since the Contessa desires it. (*To Teleky.*)
Pray, sir, accept my regrets for this interview. (*Holds out his hand. Teleky bows stiffly, without taking it.*)

Teleky (*to Contessa*). I may take my leave, madame?
[*Bows stiffly, and exit.*]

Contessa. You have offended him.

Abbé. There is something wrong. Confide yourself to—

Contessa. You did not apologize with sufficient sincerity.

Abbé. We are not at the bottom of this imbroglio—

Contessa. You have insulted my guest.

Abbé. Have confidence—

Contessa. You were wrong, you were wrong. You have involved me in an injustice.

Abbé. My long services—

Contessa. You have distressed an innocent man.

Abbé. My sincere labours—

Contessa. I am in the toils of circumstances which I do not understand; and, *Abbé*, I am beginning not to trust you!

ACT IV

SCENE FIRST

THE CORRIDOR OUTSIDE THE DRAWING-ROOM DOORS

The Abbé and the Contessa dressed for the street.

CONTESSA. The Prince tells me in his letter that he is to pay us a visit this afternoon. And it is also the afternoon of the Apostles of the Poor—they come on Tuesdays. And I am also obliged to go to see my cousin Dorotea because she says she is dying.

Abbé. She is not dying, madame.

Contessa. How can you tell she is not dying, Abbé?

Abbé. Because she always says that.

Contessa. A woman cannot die more than once, can she? Abbé, your brutality astonishes me.

Abbé. Ah, I know I have lost credit with you, signora. I followed you to the door to ask a favour of you.

Contessa. Well, Abbé?

Abbé. Something is expected this afternoon in the way of a masquerade, or a surprise party, by the Prince?

Contessa. Yes, Abbé.

Abbé. It is sure to be on foot before you return, be-

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cause it is impossible for you to get back before four o'clock.

Contessa. Yes, Abbé.

Abbé. The Apostles of the Poor will arrive in the midst of this, and it may be well that someone should be here to explain matters, and make them feel at home till you arrive.

Contessa. True, Abbé, you are all kindness.

Abbé. Now I would not for a moment arouse groundless suspicion; yet both of us know that strange things are happening in this house,—Fifi's disappearance—

Contessa. Yes, yes.

Abbé. Do I have your permission to depart with you now, as if I were going to accompany you, and then to return by the servants' door in order to be on the watch,—for protection,—for information?

Contessa. Why, I see no objection to that. You are a true friend after all.

Abbé (kisses her hand). Ah, Contessa,—to serve you!

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Hippolito.

Hippolito. I care nothing about that young man. He is as cold as the nose of a dog. He is ashamed of himself. But for Hector I will do anything! (*Knock-*

ACT FOURTH

ing at front door. Hippolito opens, and enter, in hurly-burly, Hector, Giacomo, Pietro, Rufredo, Sarragossa and Bobo, followed by servants bearing bundles. Hector has a manuscript in his hands. They take off their hats and coats and deposit their canes, all talking at once.)

Hector. I have the scheme of it.

Voices. Give us our parts.

Pietro. The plot, the plot!

Hector (to Hippolito). Are the ladies at home?

Hippolito. Yes, signor, except the Contessa, who returns a little later.

Hector. Good. We will have a rehearsal. We can dress in the dining-room. You will have something to eat for us afterwards?

Hippolito. Yes, signor.

Hector (in a lower voice). Is the chaise ordered?

Hippolito. Yes, signor.

Hector. Leave a step-ladder in the garden by the wall. (*Hippolito assents. Hector to the rest.*) Come along all of you. Ça ira, ça ira!

Sarragossa (to Hippolito as he passes). Return in five minutes. I must speak to you alone.

[*Exeunt Hector, Pietro, Rufredo, Sarragossa, Bobo and bearers of bundles.*

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Hippolito. Here's a business! Hector has enchanted the whole city. He would make the Santi Apostoli sing like cantatrici. He is like Lucifer before the fall. He is an archangel.

Enter Sarragossa as a Roman general, in a costume rather too small for him.

Sarragossa. Help me here, Hippolito.

Hippolito (helps button). Magnificent!

Sarragossa. Not bad, eh? It is the dream of my life! “Friends, Romans, countrymen: My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar, and I must pause till it come back to me.” I weep thus. (*Shows how he weeps.*)

Hippolito. He would draw tears from a stone image!

Sarragossa. I rage thus. (*He is about to show how he rages, but checks himself.*) The Abbé is not here, Hippolito?

Hippolito. Never fear; he has just gone out with the Contessa.

Sarragossa. Apropos (*giving money*)—for the plate. You protected me well, old Hippolito. (*Pause, and as an afterthought, gives more money.*) I may need more plates. What a man is that Abbé! A sneak—a scoundrel! If I could but once show up the true nature of that low caterpillar! He is a public offence, Hippolito,

ACT FOURTH

—a stench in the nostrils of all honest men.

Hippolito. I can tell you something about him. But the signor sent for me?

Sarragossa. Yes, but my business can wait. If you can tell me something against that Abbé, it can wait for an hour.

Hippolito (mysteriously). The police have this morning apprehended Matteo, the Abbé's body-servant. They found him hanging about the palazzo. What do you think they found in his possession? (*In a stage whisper.*) Fifi! I have it from my wife's mother, Matteo's cousin's aunt. Fifi's dead body!

Sarragossa. Found in the possession of the Abbé's body-servant! He puts his servant to watch the house, does he?—to see who goes in and out,—and his servant is found with Fifi's dead body! Ha, ha, ha! In his possession! Ha, ha, ha, ha! The dead body! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Help me, Hippolito! Ha, ha! Help me, can't you? Hup! Hup! Hup! (*Puts his hand on Hippolito's shoulder.*) I put that dog in the recipient, in the public waste-box, on the street corner as I passed by, on leaving the palazzo yesterday.

Hippolito (dumfounded). You, signore?

Sarragossa (nodding many times and with gesture

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of sitting down). An accident! Your fault, for leaving the dog in the armchair. (*The merriment now begins to seize Hippolito.*) Stop it, Hippolito, stop it!

Hippolito. And Matteo picked him out!

Sarragossa. The criminal! The low thief!

Hippolito. But the necklace is gone.

Sarragossa (*producing it*). I was going to ask you—what shall I do with it? I have been carrying it about ever since. How shall I return it? I thought you might leave it somewhere and let it turn up later.

Hippolito. Like the dog,—to give trouble to somebody,—me perhaps. No, no, signor!

Sarragossa. Put it in the wood-box,—in the soiled clothes. Or—I have it!—in the Abbé's pocket!

Hippolito. Those big pockets that he keeps to put bonbons in when he dines out?

Sarragossa. Why not? He must be used to finding all sorts of things in them. He is always filling them with trash. If I could show up that man in his true light,—his true light, Hippolito,—what a service to the Contessa!

Hippolito. Expose him!

Sarragossa. Unmask him!

Hippolito. Show the world what he is!

ACT FOURTH

Sarragossa. Caught at last!

Hippolito. Give me the necklace. (*Takes it.*)

[*Exit Hippolito.*]

Sarragossa (*with solemnity*). This is Nemesis, Abbé, Nemesis that stalks in darkness, overtaking the workers of iniquity! This is the power of private fate that delays long, yet walks,—walks,—walks—(*Noise of a plate breaking.*) Help! He is coming! (*Rushes madly to get away; but as he takes the direction of the front door, he returns to find himself face to face with the Abbé.*)

Abbé. Good afternoon, papa Sarragossa. You take part in the festivities of the young people, I see.

Sarragossa. How dare you call me papa Sarragossa?

Abbé. That's what the young people call you.

Sarragossa. Why, you snake, you listening reptilian, the young people may call me what they please. Shall I tell you what they call *you*, you ophidian crawler?

Abbé. My friend, be calm. You yourself are rather a climber than a crawler. Our Friday Evenings have never been the same since you were admitted to them.

Sarragossa. Our Friday Evenings! You tame cat! Do you own this palazzo? Are you prime minister?

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That's what they call you,—the prime minister.

Abbé. Ha, ha, ha! Very good!

Sarragossa. Let me tell you, you guzzling, sinister ecclesiastic, that prime ministers have falls, dismissals, disgrace, banishment.

Abbé. Come, come, *Sarragossa*. I suppose that if you married the *Contessa*, my position in the house would not be quite secure, eh? (*Takes snuff.*)

Sarragossa. How dare you place your obscene paw upon a sacred subject?

Abbé. But you can't, you see. The macaroni is in the way.

Sarragossa. O thou heartless scion of worldliness! Are there not powers on earth stronger than the prejudices of a bourgeois nobility? Is there not love, poetry, a world of life above the reach of intrigue? O ye stars that reigned above my nativity, look down with mercy upon the uncomprehending world in which I move, and particularly pity this slop-fed son of a Sienese apothecary who sees ye not. (*To Abbé.*) Go! I spurn you.

Bobo (*putting his head in through the drawing-room door.*) Papa, they are waiting for you.

ACT FOURTH

SCENE SECOND

DRAWING-ROOM

Teleky as Romeo, Rufredo as Shylock, Pietro as Othello, Giacomo as a court fool, Sarragossa as Mark Antony, Angela as Juliet. Hector, Lucia and Bobo in their usual apparel. They have their parts and are reading them.

Pietro (very crossly). I do not understand this play.

Sarragossa (to Hector). Signore, signore! You have cut out the best parts of my speech. I cannot work myself up to the tears without going through a crescendo.

Rufredo. Is this a rehearsal or a performance?

(They clamour about Hector.)

Hector. Once for all, gentlemen, I must have discipline. I have gone all lengths in giving each of you the rôles you prefer. With discipline and good nature all will go well. It will resolve itself into a series of talking tableaux.

Teleky (aside to Hector). I must tell you, sir, that your conduct is inexplicable. I have consented to put on this dress to please the young ladies, but I must have a few words with you in private.

Hector (to Teleky). Anything, anything. Only a

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little later, please. (*To Sarragossa.*) Signor Sarragossa, will you pose Romeo and Juliet for the balcony scene? You understand these things.

Sarragossa. With the greatest pleasure in life. (*Does so, bustling about and giving orders.*)

Hector (*aside to Lucia*). You must help me with all your resources. Certain events have occurred which may lead to my—my shortening my stay,—my disappearance,—sudden and complete disappearance. I cannot explain more fully. We must succeed in forcing the lovers to fly within this hour.

Lucia (*aside to Hector*). It was all I could do to get them into their costumes. He thinks he is to be made fun of.

Hector. Do they know that the chaise is in waiting?

Lucia. Yes, I told her.

Hector. Listen. We will give a rehearsal of the balcony scene. After that we will give Sarragossa a show over the bier of Cæsar. During Antony's speech, no one will observe the lovers. They must be off.

Lucia. Beware of duels in the drawing-room!

Hector. Of course—the duel is for to-morrow. (*To the rest.*) Now gentlemen, attention! Master Romeo,—Madame Juliet—

ACT FOURTH

Hippolito (announcing). The Signori the Apostles of the Poor!

Enter Protocpoli, Giusti, Frescobaldi and Donato. They are quaint old fogies very unlike each other, but alike in being gallant gentlemen with beautiful manners.

Protocpoli (to Lucia, who has come forward). Pardon, signorina. We intrude? Monsieur l'Abbé told us we were expected.

Lucia. You are most welcome. (*Introducing.*) Prince Teleky,—my cousin Hector: Cavaliere Protocpoli, Conte Giusti, Commandante Frescobaldi, Signor Donato,—members of a benevolent society, the Apostles of the Poor; but, I should say, old friends, whom we welcome always.

Hector. Of course. But we will give a performance for your charity next week. And you are come in time to be of the greatest assistance by your criticism. Will you not sit down as audience?

Protocpoli. Charming!
Giusti. Most gratifying!
Frescobaldi. Excellent idea!
Donato. What a pleasure!

Protocpoli. What do you call the play?

Hector. It is a series of scenes from Shakespeare.

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Protocpoli. Ah, this is indeed good fortune.

Hector. You know we Italians are accused of taking liberties with Shakespeare. Nothing is more unjust. We simply use what we find.

Giusti. Most interesting!

Hector. The first characters to appear are Romeo and Juliet.

(He continues to talk to the Apostoli in dumb-show.

In the subsequent episode Hector never quite loses touch with the Apostoli, but uses a sort of running conversation with them to mask his odious declaration to Angela.)

Teleky (aside to *Angela*). This is a most atrocious outrage. He would have us recite those divine lines, while he laughs in his sleeve.

Angela. Let him laugh, it will not hurt us.

Teleky. He will make love to you.

Angela. He will not dare.

Teleky. He is an open suitor for your hand.

Angela. He will not dare, my sweet one.

Teleky. If he does,

I'll run him through the body.

Hector (to the actors). Now, gentlemen. (To the Apostles.) You see, this side of the drama has never been understood.

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Teleky. Am I to begin?

Hector. If you please.

Teleky (as Romeo, to Juliet). "By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am.
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself
Because it is an enemy to thee."

Hector. Too cold, too cold! It is no summary
Made by a sleepy doctor to his class,
But love and transportation.

(*To Teleky.*) Stand to one side and let me show the way.
You must stand closer to the lady, sir,
And let some natural passion fill the words.
Excuse me. (*To Juliet.*) "By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am.
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself
Because it is an enemy to thee."

(*Protocopoli and the rest of the Apostles applaud.*)

Protocopoli. Magnificent, wonderful. (*They talk and exclaim. Hector is still kneeling, holding Angela's hand and attempting to put his arm round her waist.*)

Hector (aside to Angela). Darling, I love thee! All
this parody
Is but a frame that I may tell thee so.
I love thee, hotly, fiercely, terribly!
Fly with me.

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Angela (aside to Hector). Unhand me, sir! How dare you speak to me!

Unhand me, or I'll strike you in the face.

Hector (to Angela). Protesting angel! (*Rises. To the Apostoli.*) All amateurs, you know, Lack passion. 'Tis a natural defect, And one not easily cured.

Protocopoli. You are a master!

Donato. Truly, wonderful.

Hector. Ah, so-so,—my hobby, my distraction.

(*Talks to the Apostoli in dumb-show.*)

Teleky (aside to Angela). I'll have his blood for this!

Angela. Not here, not here!

You must not speak to him. Not here, not here.

You cannot, shall not.—Water! I am ill.

(*Totters to a chair. General commotion. Somebody fetches water.*)

Lucia. Give her more air. A momentary qualm That she is subject to. Give her more air. Is it not so, my sweet one? Come with me. She must lie down a moment.

(*Lucia leads Angela out. Hector following, very solicitous.*)

ACT FOURTH

Hector.

May I come?

[*Exeunt Angela and Lucia; and, by another door, exit Teleky.*

Hector (returning). Too bad, too bad. Now for our serious work,—

For Saragossa and Mark Antony.

Reënter Lucia.

Lucia. She will be well again in a moment, and bids us proceed.

Hector. Now, lads, masters, senators, populace, you all must play. We must have the Roman scene to the life. Cæsar's burial! (*He works with great activity, pulling out the large Italian chest which is to serve as the bier, &c. Everybody works furiously, pulling about rugs and chairs.*) Cæsar! We have no body of Cæsar!

A voice. Bobo, take Bobo.

Another voice. His nose will not do.

A third voice. Too much hair—Cæsar was bald.

Protocopoly. Why cannot I take a part in this picture? Behold my nose!

Hector. Splendid!

Protocopoly. And as for hair—(*He lifts off his toupee, disclosing a bald head.*)

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Hector. You are a trump, Cavaliere; you are a Trojan. (*To the rest.*) Put the bloody robe on the Apostle immediately.

Giusti. And I?

Frescobaldi. And I?

Donato. And I?

Hector. The doge's costumes, of course. The pontifex maximus must have been at the funeral, and prætors and ædiles. (*They dress the Apostles up. Their costumes are grotesque and agreeable pieces of idiocy. To Protocpoli.*) Step up here, Cavaliere. (*Places Protocpoli recumbent upon the chest.*)

Protocpoli. This is the most enchanting sport I ever had in my life.

Hector. Now then, we are off! Shylock, stand here. Jews of course were in the audience. Othello!—Moors, of course, too.—Giacomo!—Fools of course, always. (*To Sarragossa.*) Now, old fellow, go ahead.—One moment! (*To all.*) When he says “to bury Cæsar,”—all of you give a sort of low wailing roar.

Sarragossa. “Friends, Romans and countrymen,
lend me your ears:
I come to bury Cæsar”—(*All groan.*)

ACT FOURTH

Enter Contessa and Abbé.

Contessa. What is this caterwauling? Mercy! Who is that?

(Protocpoli has assumed a sitting posture in the tomb.)

Abbé. It is another bandit, madame. He has introduced a whole gang of them.

Contessa. Prince, what are these doings in my house?

Hector (to the actors). Wait! Keep your places all. It's a *coup de théâtre*.

Contessa. Protocpoli! Giusti,—Frescobaldi!

Hector. Forgive them, Contessa,—a charade. Had you waited three minutes more we should have received you as Christians. *(To the actors.)* Now for intermission. *(They break up and circulate, all talking at once. To Contessa.)* A thousand pardons for taking liberties with your drawing-room.

Protocpoli (to Contessa). I could not resist. It is the most rejuvenating piece of nonsense.

Giusti. After all, apostles ought to attend funerals.

Contessa. But, Sarragossa, your uniform is too small.

Sarragossa. I could not wait to have it enlarged.

Contessa. Well, I forgive you. And now, Prince, I must have a talk with you. *(They sit down together at*

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left front of stage.) Your note was a surprise to me.

Lucia (coming up). Oh, auntie, we have had such fun. I never knew what talented people we all were. (*Aside to Hector.*) Hippolito wants to speak to you. (*To Abbé who has come up.*) Ah, Abbé, I wish you could have been here.

Abbé. Too old, signorina, and you would have made me play the villain, I fear.

(*Hector has risen at Lucia's approach, and, as he excuses himself, the Abbé takes his seat.*)

Hector. One moment, dear madame. (*Lucia joins Giacomo, who is approaching.*)

Contessa (to Abbé). Again you were wrong, Abbé. It is a most innocent and charming scene.

Abbé. The end is not yet. Some calamity is impending.

Contessa. Nonsense, Abbé.

(*Sarragossa joins the Contessa and Abbé. Hippolito, who has before entered and whispered to Lucia, now approaches Hector, who is at the right front of the stage, and hands a note. Lucia and Giacomo are making conversation to each other a few feet away, but are on pins and needles to see the note.*)

Hector (in a stage whisper after reading note, to Lucia and Giacomo). Hallelujah! a challenge. They have flown to Venice. The cup of my happiness is full.

ACT FOURTH

Lucia, I could embrace you! Giacomo, I love you. Hush! Call them all about me and I will explain everything.

Hippolito. Pardon, sir, the police.

Hector. What police?

Hippolito. The police that surround the house. (*Hector does not understand.*) The police you and Signor Bobo ordered to surround the house.

Hector. Merciful powers of heaven! I forgot the police.

Hippolito. You see, sir, I could not help it. The ladder stands, thus—they get down, thus—behold the police! Signor, signor, I could do nothing. The police took them in the alley like doves or lost children. They are bringing them about to the front door. Signor,—signor!

Hector (to Giacomo and Lucia). This is terrible. What shall we do?

Giacomo. Terrible? Not a bit. You are a manager; but you are about to witness a scene not on the programme. That is all. Take a front seat and laugh.

Hector. But the police,—but—but—you know I have engagements this afternoon. I told Lucia I might have to leave early.

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Giacomo. Nerves gone? But hush, it is coming.

(Many voices are heard in the corridor. The hubbub increases. The doors at centre back of stage are thrown open, and enter a guardian of the peace, conducting Teleky and Angela, both in considerable disarray due to rapid change of costume and to the scaling of the wall. Angela's hair is about her shoulders. She shows a tendency to hang upon Teleky, who looks sheepish enough. The doors remain open, showing more police in the corridor.)

Contessa. Angela, in the name of Heaven! Hector! Abbé! What has happened?

Abbé. It is as I predicted. (*Points to Teleky.*) Behold the malefactor!

Contessa. Angela, my darling Angela! What has happened? Speak, somebody, and tell me! Prince Teleky! Sarragossa! Tell me what it is! I feel as if I were going to faint. Oh, help me, somebody!

Sarragossa (*in a deep voice*). I am near you, Teresa.

Abbé. Put your confidence in me, signora.

Julia (*without*). There is an impostor in this house! Bring me to him! I have tracked him here! He cannot escape me. The impostor, the impostor! (*Enter Julia at the back.*) Where is Hector Bononcini?

(Now from the moment that her voice has been heard, Hector has been seized with visible agitation, and

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just before Julia's entry, he has taken refuge under the harpsichord, where he now crouches.)

Abbé (stepping forward and pointing to Teleky).

There is Hector Bononcini.

Julia. That! That is not Hector Bononcini.

Contessa (in a faint voice). Save me, Rinaldo.

(She faints. As she does so, both Sarragossa and the Abbé spring to save her, and she falls between them, Sarragossa getting rather the better position and continuing to fight off the Abbé, while he himself soothes the prostrate Countess.)

Sarragossa. Teresa, my darling one, open your eyes. It is your Rinaldo.—Keep off, you infernal brute, you have killed her with your machinations.—My sweet poppet, my pet lamb, look up!—Water, you fool! Bring water!—*(He is stroking her brow.)* It is your Rinaldo. *(Someone has given the Abbé a glass of water, which he is proffering; but Sarragossa, with his face close to the Contessa's, fights off the Abbé without looking at him, and knocks the glass from his hand.)* Keep off, you ruffian, how dare you!

Abbé (wiping the water from his clothes). I bide my time.

(While this is going on Julia has advanced to the front of the stage, looking about.)

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Julia. Where is he? Show him to me! I know he is here!

(Hector has fled from under the harpsichord and is at the door.)

Hector. Let me out! Let me out! *(He is turned back by the police.)*

Julia. Ah, *traître, scélérat!* I have you now! *(She makes for him.)*

Hector. For the love of Heaven, Protocopoli, seize her—she is a mad woman! Giusti! My dear Giusti! Hold her while I explain. *(The two Apostles lay hold of Julia.)*

Julia. Let me go, or I'll rattle your teeth, you old harlequins! *(She struggles.)*

Hector. Have you got her fast?

Protocopoli. }
Giusti. } Safe, signor.

Hector (*mounts on a chair on the farther side of the harpsichord. The Contessa has come to her senses.*)
Listen, my friends: 't is true that I am Hector.
My Aunt Teresa, listen. It is I,
Your nephew Hector; and this lady here
Is Julia, my affianced, lovely bride.

Julia. Ah, hypocrite! *(Struggles.)*

ACT FOURTH

Protoccoli. Make haste, signor; for she is strong,
And we are old.

Hector. My loved and darling wife.

Julia. Devil!

Hector. Prince Teleky, your almost royal name
Has, in this cause, been used to help your suit,
And when you understand you will forgive me.
(*To Contessa.*) Give me the letter, Countess, that I
wrote,

Asking the hand of your sweet Angela
For Stephen Teleky.

(*The Countess produces the letter from her reticule,
and it is handed across the stage to Hector.*)

This letter will explain us to ourselves.

Julia shall read it first. Nay, hold her hands,
Or she will tear it. Yes, the hand is mine,
But mark the signature. (*Pointing.*) The Prince, my
friend,

Was used by fate through me. It is not I,
But he, that seeks to wed sweet Angela;
And in his name again I give the note
Back to my aunt, the Countess. (*The note is handed back.*)

Julia (to Hector). You are mine?

Hector. Yours and yours always; yours to have and
hold.

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Yours in this enterprise, from first to last.

(*To Protocopoli and Giusti.*) Release her, signors; she is tractable.

(*Julia and Hector embrace. Hector now speaks while Julia hangs repentant on his heart.*)

Much must be said and done ere all the knots
Are ravelled from this tangled history.
But 't is a joyous, happy-ending farce
To four of us. Stephen, I will subscribe
The whole sky over with apologies,
And make them good with fact. Forgive me now,
And later you shall know the reasons why.

(*Hector and Teleky shake hands.*)

My Aunt Teresa, you forgive me too? (*Kneels.*)

Hippolito. It is, it is, signora! It is Hector,
My little Hector.

Contessa. Ah, I feel it is,
And do accept him (*kisses him*). Angela, my child
(*kisses her*).

(*To Teleky.*) And you, good friend, I ever did accept
Under whatever name.

(*A movement at the door. Enter an officer of the police pushing before him Matteo, whom he holds by the shoulder with his left hand, while, with his right, he holds aloft the remains of Fifi.*)

ACT FOURTH

All. Fifi!

Contessa. Fifi, my darling Fifi! (*Takes the dog.*)

Officer. Found in this man's possession!

(*General consternation.*)

A voice. The Abbé's servant!

Officer. Skulking in disguise.

Hippolito (*with accusing vehemence*). Where is the necklace?

Abbé. Matteo, be calm.

Where did you find that object?

Officer. Ah, indeed!

Matteo. I found it in the street.

Abbé. He found it in the street.

Many voices. Where is the necklace?

Matteo (*shrugs*). I cannot say.

Abbé. Let him be searched. (*Officer searches Matteo.*)

Officer. Nothing, signora.

Matteo (*shrugs*). It was not there!

(*Commotion, and cries of "Strange!" "The rascal!" &c.*)

Sarragossa. In catching thieves it is the wiser plan
To search the master when you catch the man.

Contessa. Sarragossa, you amaze me. Pray be silent.

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Sarragossa. Can I be longer silent? I have seen
A pilferer at work for many months,
A petty pope of intrigue, and a knave.

Abbé. Madame, protect me. I am innocent.

Sarragossa. Let him be searched!

(*Consternation. Everyone talks at once.*)

Giacomo (aside to Abbé). Abbé, submit; for if you
have it not,
Your enemies are damned.

Abbé. Must I expose
The private little trifles in my pocket?—
My own affairs? It is a degradation.

Giacomo (confidentially). Have you the necklace?

Abbé. No!

Giacomo. Submit, and triumph. The rest is laughter.

Abbé (to all). Search me! (*Sensation.*)

Officer. Ajutante! (*The adjutant comes forward, the officer seating himself at a table with pen and paper.*) Ready!

Ajutante (producing articles from Abbé's pocket). Right side!—A snuff-box. A piece of green sealing wax.

A voice. The Contessa's wax.

Contessa. Ah, Abbé, you are welcome to it.

ACT FOURTH

Ajutante. Two dried prunes. (*Laughter.*) A thimble.

(*Laughter.*)

Sarragossa. Do you sew, Abbé?

Ajutante. A yard of blue ribbon.

A voice. It is a magpie's nest!

Ajutante. Four cakes of chocolate.—Left side!

Giacomo. Courage, Abbé, this is nothing but gaiety.

Ajutante. A newspaper scrap. Ah? ah! ah-h! What's this? (*Produces the necklace. Shouts and groans, hisses, laughter, wild disturbance and cries of "Shame!"*)

Abbé. I am innocent.

Contessa. O Abbé, Abbé, how could you do it!

Abbé. I am innocent!

Officer. Shall I arrest him, Contessa?

Sarragossa. No, my Teresa, let us not beat down A falling reputation. He is punished.

It were unchristian to pursue him more.

(*Murmurs of approval: "Noble," "The gallant gentleman," "A heart of gold," &c. To Abbé.*)

Abbé, I loved thee not, yet thy disgrace Drags sorrow from an eye unused to flow. (*He operates his handkerchief.*)

My friends, my friends, we must be merciful,

A SAUSAGE FROM BOLOGNA

Keeping our hearts still tender. Time may bring
Some mitigating circumstance to light
To make us bless forbearance. Which of us
Could stand to have his inmost pockets picked
Without a sense of shame? Prince Teleky,
You have been guilty of some trickery
To win your Angela. And, Hector, you
Have dipped your soul in lies for Julia's sake.
I cannot say what Giacomo has done
Beyond his daily stint of knavery
For his Lucia's sake, but surely something.—
Why should I shame to say it? I myself,
To win a woman, almost lost my soul.
Abbé, your hand!

Contessa. *Rinaldo*, you are right!
And each of us has learned a page of love
Out of a book of sorrows. Angela,
Your griefs have blossomed in four marriages.
It all grew out of you. Speak the last word.

Angela. I am too happy yet to speak at all.

THE END

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